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AN ENGLISHMAN IN PARIS

(NOTES AND RECOLLECTIONS)

by
Alfred W. H. Johnston

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AN ENGLISHMAN IN PARIS.

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I KNEW Louis-Napoleon, if not intimately, at least very well, for nearly a quarter of a century, and I felt myself as little competent to give an opinion on him on the last as on the first day of our acquaintance. I feel almost certain of one thing, though; that, if he had had very ample means of his own, the Second Empire would have never been. Since its fall I have

heard and read a great deal about Louis-Napoleon's unfaltering belief in his star; I fancy it would have shone less brightly to him but for the dark, impenetrable sky of impecuniosity in which it was set. Méry said that Lamartine proclaimed the Second Republic as a means of staving off his creditors; and the accusation was justified by Lamartine's own words in the *Assemblée Nationale* itself on the 11th of September, 1848: "Je déclare hautement que le 24 Février à midi, je ne pensais pas à la République." To use a popular locution, the author of "*L'Histoire des Girondins*" suspected, perhaps, that Louis-Napoleon might take a leaf from his, the author's, book; for the needy man, though perhaps not a better psychologist than most men, has a very comprehensive key to the motives of a great number of his fellow-creatures, especially if they be Frenchmen and professional politicians. I am speaking by the light of many years' observation. Furthermore, the pecuniary embarrassments of Louis-Napoleon were no secret to any one. "I have established a republic for money's sake," Lamartine said to himself; "some one will endeavour to overthrow it for money's sake." I am aware that this is not a very elevated standard whereby to judge political events; but I do not profess to be an historian—mine is only the little huckster shop of history.

It is more than probable that this was the reason why Lamartine told Louis-Napoleon to go back to England, in their interview—a secret one—on the 2nd of March, 1848.

It was M. de Persigny who told me this many years afterwards. "The Prince could afford to humour De Lamartine in that way," he added, "for if ever a

man was justified in believing in his star it was he. I'll tell you a story which is scarcely known to half a dozen men, including the Emperor and myself; I am not aware of its having been told by any biographer. The moment we ascertained the truth of the news that reached us from Paris, we made for the coast, and, on Saturday morning, we crossed in the mail-packet. It was very rough, and we had a good shaking, so that when we got to Boulogne we were absolutely 'done up.' But we heard that a train was to start for Paris, and, as a matter of course, the Prince would not lose a minute. We had to walk to Neufchâtel, about three miles distant, because there was something the matter with the rails, I do not know what. We flung ourselves into the first compartment, which already contained two travellers. Almost immediately we had got under weigh, one of these, who had looked very struck when we entered, addressed the Prince by name. He turned out to be Monsieur Biesta, who had paid a visit to Napoleon during his imprisonment at Ham, and who immediately recognized him. Monsieur Biesta had just left the Duc de Nemours. I do not know whether he was at that time a Republican, a Monarchist, or an Imperialist, but he was a man of honour, and it was thanks to him that the son of Louis-Philippe made his escape. The other one was the Marquis d'Arragon, who died about a twelvemonth afterwards. All went well until we got to Amiens, where we had to wait a very long while, the train which was to have taken us on to Paris having just left. For once in a way the Prince got impatient. He who on the eve of the Coup d'Etat remained, at any rate outwardly, perfectly stolid, was

fuming and fretting at the delay. One would have thought that the whole of Paris was waiting at the Northern station to receive him with open arms, and to proclaim him Emperor there and then. But impatient or not, we had to wait, and, what was worse or better, the train that finally took us came to a dead stop at Persan, where the news reached us that the rails had been broken up by the insurgents at Pontoise, that a frightful accident had happened in consequence to the train we had missed by a few minutes at Amiens, in which at least thirty lives were lost, besides a great number of wounded. But for the merest chance we should have been among the passengers. Was I right in saying that the Prince was justified in believing in his star?"

I did not meet with Louis-Napoleon until he was a candidate for the presidency of the Second Republic, and while he was staying at the Hôtel du Rhin in the Place Vendôme. Of course, I had heard a great deal about him, but my informants, to a man, were English. While the latter were almost unanimous in predicting Louis-Napoleon's eventual advent to the throne, the French, though in no way denying the influence of the Napoleonic legend, were apt to shrug their shoulders more or less contemptuously at the pretensions of Hortense's son; for few ever designated him by any other name, until later on, when the nickname of "Badinguet" began to be on every one's lips. Consequently, I was anxious to catch a glimpse of him; but before noting the impressions produced by that first meeting, I will devote a few lines to the origin of that celebrated sobriquet.

Personally, I never heard it in connection with

Louis-Napoleon until his betrothal to Mdle. Eugénie de Montijo became common "talk;" but I had heard and seen it in print a good many years before, and even as late as '48. There was, however, not the slightest attempt at that time to couple it with the person of the future Emperor. Three solutions have made the round of the papers at various times: (1) that it was the name of the stonemason or bricklayer who lent Louis-Napoleon his clothes to facilitate his escape from Ham in June, 1845; (2) that it was the name of the soldier who was wounded by the Prince on the 5th of August, 1840, at Boulogne, when the latter fired on Captain Col-Puygellier; (3) that about the latter end of the forties a pipe-manufacturer introduced a pipe, the head of which resembled that of Louis-Napoleon, and that the pipemaker's name was Badinguet.

The latter solution may be dismissed at once as utterly without foundation. With regard to that having reference to the stonemason, no stonemason lent Louis-Napoleon his clothes. The disguise was provided by Dr. Conneau from a source which has never been revealed. There was, moreover, no stonemason of the name of Badinguet at Ham, and, when Louis-Napoleon crossed the drawbridge of the castle, his face partially hidden by a board he was carrying on his shoulder, a workman, who mistook him for one of his mates, exclaimed, "Hullo, there goes Bertoux." Bertoux, not Badinguet.

The name of the soldier wounded by Louis-Napoleon was Geoffroy; he was a grenadier, decorated on the battle-field; and shortly after Napoleon's accession to the throne, he granted him a pension. There can be

no possible mistake about the name, seeing that it was attested at the trial subsequent to the fiasco before the Court of Peers.

The real fact is this: Gavarni, like Balzac, invented many names, suggested in many instances by those of their friends and acquaintances, or sometimes merely altered from those they had seen on signboards. The great caricurist had a friend in the Département des Landes named Badingo; about '38 he began his sketches of students and their companions ("Etudiants et Etudiantes"), and in one of them a medical student shows his lady-love an articulated skeleton.

"Look at this," says the former; "this is Eugénie, the former sweetheart of Badinguet—that tall, fair girl who was so fond of *meringues*. He has had her mounted for thirty-six francs."

The connection is very obvious; it only wanted one single wag to remember the skit when Napoleon became engaged to Eugénie de Montijo. He set the ball rolling, and the rest followed as a matter of course.

At the same time, Gavarni had not been half as original, as he imagined, in the invention of the name. Badinguet was a character in a one-act farce entitled "Le Mobilier de Rosine," played for the first time in 1828, at the Théâtre Montansier; and there is a piece of an earlier date even, in which Grassot played a character by the name of Badinguet. In 1848, there was a kind of Jules Vernesque piece at the Porte Saint-Martin, in which Badinguet, a Parisian shop-keeper, starts with his wife Euphémie for some distant island.

To return to Louis-Napoleon at the Hôtel du Rhin,

and my first glimpse of him. I must own that I was disappointed with it. Though I had not the slightest ground for expecting to see a fine man, I did not expect to see so utterly an insignificant one, and badly dressed in the bargain. On the evening in question, he wore a brown coat of a peculiar colour, a green plush waistcoat, and a pair of yellowish trousers, the like of which I have never seen on the legs of any one off the stage. And yet Lord Normanby, and a good many more who have said that he looked every inch a king, were not altogether wrong. There was a certain gracefulness about him which owed absolutely nothing either to his tailor, his barber, or his boot-maker. "The gracefulness of awkwardness" sounds remarkably like an Irish bull, yet I can find no other term to describe his gait and carriage. Louis-Napoleon's legs seemed to have been an after-thought of his Creator—they were too short for his body, and his head appeared constantly bent down, to supervise their motion; consequently, their owner was always at a disadvantage when compelled to make use of them. But when standing still, or on horseback, there was an indescribable something about the man which at once commanded attention. I am not overlooking the fact that, on the occasion of our first meeting, my curiosity had been aroused; but I doubt whether any one, endowed with the smallest power of observation, though utterly ignorant with regard to his previous history, and equally sceptical with regard to his future destiny, could have been in his company for any length of time without being struck with his appearance.

When I entered the apartment on the evening in question, Louis-Napoleon was leaning in his favourite

attitude against the mantelpiece, smoking the scarcely ever absent cigarette, and pulling at the heavy brown moustache, the ends of which in those days were not waxed into points as they were later on. There was not the remotest likeness to any portrait of the Bonaparte family I had ever seen. He wore his thin, lank hair much longer than he did afterwards. The most startling features were decidedly the aquiline nose and the eyes; the latter, of a greyish-blue, were comparatively small and somewhat almond-shaped, but, except at rare intervals, there was an impenetrable look, which made it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to read their owner's thoughts by them. If they were "the windows of his soul," their blinds were constantly down. The "I am pleased to see you, sir," with which he welcomed me, holding out his hand at the same time, was the English of an educated German who had taken great pains to get the right accent and pronunciation, without, however, completely succeeding; and when I heard him speak French, I detected at once his constant struggle with the same difficulties. The struggle lasted till the very end of his life, though, by dint of speaking very slowly, he overcame them to a marvellous extent. But the moment he became in any way excited, the *f*'s and the *v*'s and the *p*'s were always trying to oust the *v*'s, the *d*'s and the *b*'s from their newly-acquired positions, and often gained a momentary victory. There is an amusing story to that effect, in connection with Napoleon's first interview with Bismarck. I will not vouch for its truth, but, on the face of it, it sounds blunt enough to be genuine. The Emperor was complimenting the German statesman on his French.

"M. de Bismarck, I have never heard a German speak French as you do," said Napoleon.

"Will you allow me to return the compliment, sire?"

"Certainly."

"I have never heard a Frenchman speak French as you do." *

When Prince Louis-Napoleon held out his hand and I looked into his face, I felt almost tempted to put him down as an opium-eater. Ten minutes afterwards, I felt convinced that, to use a metaphor, he himself was the drug, and that every one with whom he came in contact was bound to yield to its influence. When I came away that evening, I could have given Cavaignac, Thiers, Lamartine, Hugo, and the rest, who wanted to make a cat's-paw of him, a timely warning, if they would have condescended to listen to, and profit by it, which I am certain they would not have done. Strange as it may seem, every one of these men, and, with the exception of one, all undoubtedly clever, thought Louis-Napoleon either an imbecile or a secret drunkard. And, what is more, they endeavoured to propagate their opinion throughout the length and breadth, not only of France, but of Europe.

As usual, the one who was really the greatest non-entity among the latter was most lavish in his contempt. I am alluding to General Cavaignac. The nobodies who have governed or misgoverned France since the fall of Sedan were, from an intellectual point

* In the documents relating to the affair at Strasburg, there is the report to Louis-Philippe by an officer in the 46th regiment of the line, named Pleigné, in which the latter, borrowing the process of Balzac as applied to the French of the Baron de Nucingen, credits Louis-Napoleon with the following phrase: "*Fous êtes técoré de Chuillet; fous tefez être un prafe, che vous técoré.*"—EDITOR.

of view, eagles compared to that surly and bumptious drill-sergeant, who had nothing, absolutely nothing, to recommend him for the elevated position he coveted. He was the least among all those brilliant African soldiers whose names and prowess were on every one's lips; he had really been made a hero of, at so much per line, by the staff of the *National*, where his brother Godefroy wielded unlimited power. He was all buckram; and, in the very heart of Paris, and in the midst of that republic whose fiercest watchword, whose loudest cry, was "equality," he treated partisans and opponents alike, as he would have treated a batch of refractory Arabs in a distant province of that newly-conquered African soil. He disliked every one who did not wear a uniform, and assumed a critical attitude towards every one who did. His republicanism was probably as sincere as that of Thiers—it meant "*La République c'est moi*:" with this difference, that Thiers was amiable, witty, and charming, though treacherous, and that Cavaignac was the very reverse. His honesty was beyond suspicion; that is, he felt convinced that he was the only possible saviour of France: but it was impaired by his equally sincere conviction that bribery and coercion—of cajoling he would have none—were admissible, nay, incumbent to attain that end. "*Thiers, c'est la république en écureuil, Cavaignac c'est la république en ours mal léché*," said a witty journalist. He and Louis-Napoleon were virtually the two men who were contending for the presidential chair, and the chances of Cavaignac may be judged by the conclusion of the verbal report of one of Lamoricière's emissaries, who canvassed one of the departments.

“‘The thing might be feasible,’ said an elector, ‘if your general’s name was Geneviève de Brabant, or that of one of the four sons of Aymon.* But his name is simply Cavaignac—Cavaignac, and that’s all. I prefer Napoleon; at any rate, there is a ring about that name.’ And I am afraid that eleven-twelfths of the electors are of the same opinion.”

As for Ledru Rollin, Raspail, Changarnier, and even Lamartine and the Prince de Joinville, some of whom were candidates against their will, they were out of the running from the very start, though, curiously enough, the son of the monarch whom the republic had driven from the throne obtained more votes than the man who had proclaimed that republic. These votes were altogether discarded as unconstitutional, though one really fails to see why one member of a preceding dynasty should have been held to be more eligible than another. Be this as it may, the votes polled by the sailor prince amounted to over twenty-three thousand, showing that he enjoyed a certain measure of popularity. It is doubtful whether the Duc d’Aumale or the Duc de Nemours would have obtained a fifth of that number. As I have already said, the latter was disliked by his father’s opponents for his suspected legitimist tendencies, and tacitly blamed by some of the partisans of the Orleanist régime for his lack of resistance on the 24th of February; the former’s submission “to the will of the nation,” as embodied in a manifesto “to the inhabitants of Algeria,” provoked no enthusiasm either among friends or foes.†

* The four knights of a Carlovingian legend, who were mounted on one horse named Bayard.—EDITOR.

† During the sacking of the Tuileries, the mob ruthlessly destroyed the busts and pictures of every living son of Louis-Philippe, with the exception of those of the Prince de Joinville.—EDITOR.

Perhaps public rumour was not altogether wrong, when it averred that the D'Orléans were too tight-fisted to spend their money in electioneering literature. The expense involved in that item was a terrible obstacle to Louis-Napoleon and his few faithful henchmen; for, though the Napoleonic idea was pervading all classes of society, there was, correctly speaking, no Bonapartist party to shape it for the practical purposes of the moment. The Napoleonic idea was a fond remembrance of France's glorious past, rather than a hope of its renewal in the future. Even the greatest number of the most ardent worshippers of that marvellous soldier of fortune, doubted whether his nephew was sufficiently popular to obtain an appreciable following, and those who did not doubt were mostly poor. While Dufaure and Lamoricière were scattering money broadcast, and using pressure of the most arbitrary kind, in order to insure Cavaignac's success, Louis-Napoleon and his knot of partisans were absolutely reduced to their own personal resources. Miss Howard—afterwards Comtesse de Beauregard—and Princesse Mathilde had given all they could; a small loan was obtained from M. Fould; and some comparatively scanty supplies had been forthcoming from England—it was said at the time, with how much truth I know not, that Lords Palmerston and Malmesbury had contributed: but the exchequer was virtually empty. A stray remittance of a few thousand francs, from an altogether unexpected quarter, and most frequently from an anonymous sender, arrived now and then; but it was what the Germans call “a drop of water in a very hot frying-pan;” it barely sufficed to stop a hole. Money was imperatively wanted for the printing of

millions upon millions of handbills, thousands and thousands of posters, and their distribution; for the expenses of canvassers, electioneering agents, and so forth. The money went to the latter, the rest was obtained on credit. Prince Louis, confident of success, emptied his pockets of the last five-franc pieces; when he had no more, he promised to pay. He was as badly off as his famous uncle before the turn of fortune came.

In connection with this dire impecuniosity, I remember a story for the truth of which I can vouch as if I had had it from Louis-Napoleon's own lips. In front of Siraudin's confectioner's shop at the angle of the Boulevard des Capucines and the Rue de la Paix, there sits an old woman with two wooden legs. About '48, when she was very pretty and dressed with a certain coquettishness, she was already there, though sitting a little higher up, in front of the wall of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which has since made room for the handsome establishment of Giroux. Behind her, on the wall, were suspended for sale some cheap and not very artistically executed reproductions of Fragonard, "*Le Coucher de la Mariée*," etc., all of which would fetch high prices now; also songs, the tunes of which she played with great taste on her violin. It was reported that she had been killed during the attack on the ministry, but to people's great surprise she reappeared a few days afterwards. Prince Louis, who was staying at the Place Vendôme, then used to take a short cut by the Rue Neuve des Capucines to the Boulevards, and it seems that he never passed her without giving her something. In a few weeks she came to look upon his contributions as

a certain part of her income. She knew who he was, and, curiously enough, seemed to be aware not only of his political preoccupations, but of his pecuniary embarrassments. I am unable to say whether she was in sympathy with the former, but she was evidently concerned about the latter; for, one evening, after thanking Louis-Napoleon, she added, "Monseigneur, je voudrais vous dire un mot."

"Parlez, madame."

"On me dit que vous êtes fort gêné dans ce moment. J'ai trois billets de mille francs chez moi, qui ne font rien. Voulez-vous me permettre de vous les offrir; vous me les rendrez quand vous serez empereur."

Prince Louis did not accept them, but he never forgot a kindness, and when he did become Emperor, he offered her a small annuity. The answer was characteristic of her independence. "Dites à l'empereur qu'il est bien bon de se rappeler de moi, mais je ne puis pas accepter son offre. S'il avait accepté mon argent, je ne dis pas, maintenant, non." And while I am writing these notes, she still sits in her usual place, though I have heard it said more than once that she is the owner of one or two houses in the Avenue de l'Opéra, and that she gave a considerable marriage portion to her daughter, who has remained ignorant of the sources of her mother's income, who was educated in the country, and has never been to Paris. One of the conditions of her marriage was that she should emigrate to Australia. For the latter part of the story, I will, however, not vouch.

During the months of October and November, '48,

I saw Prince Louis at least a dozen times, though only once away from his own apartments. There was really "nowhere to go," for most of the salons had closed their doors, and those which remained open were invaded by political partisans of all shades. Conversation, except on one topic, there was little or none. Social entertainments were scarcely to be thought of after the bloody disorders in June: Paris trade suffered in consequence, and the whole of the shop-keeping element, which virtually constituted the greater part of the Garde Nationale, regretted the fall of the Orleans dynasty to which it had so materially contributed. After these disorders in June, the troops bivouacked for a whole month on the Boulevards: on the Boulevard du Temple with its seven theatres; on the Boulevard Poissonnière, almost in front of the Gymnase; on the Boulevard Montmartre, in front of the Variétés; on the Place de la Bourse, in front of the Vaudeville. The new masters did not care to be held up to ridicule; they insinuated, rather than asserted, that the insults levelled from the stage had contributed to the insurrection; and, seeing that the bourgeoisie, very contrite already, did not care to hear "the praise of the saviours of the country" by command, they deserted the play-houses and kept their money in their pockets. The Constituent Assembly was compelled to grant the managers an indemnity; but, as it could not keep the soldiers there for ever, and as it cared still less to vote funds to its enemies while its supporters were clamouring for every cent of it, the strict supervision gradually relaxed. The first to take advantage of this altered state of things was Clairville, with his "*La Propriété c'est le Vol*" (November 28,

'48), a skit on the celebrated phrase of Proudhon. It is very doubtful whether the latter had uttered it in the sense with which the playwright invested it; but fear is proverbially illogical, and every one in Paris ran to see the piece, trusting probably that it might produce a salutary effect on those who intended to take the philosopher's axiom literally.

"La Propriété c'est le Vol" was described on the bills as "a socialistic extravaganza in three acts and seven tableaux." The scene of the first tableau represents the garden of Eden. The Serpent, who is the Evil Spirit, declares war at once upon Adam, who embodies the principle of Property. The Serpent was a deliberate caricature of Proudhon with his large spectacles.

In the subsequent tableaux, Adam, by a kind of metempsychosis, had been changed into Bonichon, an owner of house property in the Paris of the nineteenth century. The Serpent, though still wearing his spectacles, had been equally transformed into a modern opponent of all property. We are in February, '48. Bonichon and some of his fellow-bourgeois are feasting in honour of the proposed measures of reform, when they are scared out of their wits by the appearance of the Serpent, who informs them that the Republic has sidled up to Reform, managed to hide itself beneath its cloak, and been proclaimed. The next scene brings us to the year 1852 (four years in advance of the period), when the right of every one to live by the toil of his hands has become law. Bonichon is being harassed and persecuted by a crowd of handicraftsmen and others, who insist on working for him whether he likes it or not. The glazier smashes his windows, in order to compel him

to have new panes put in. The paperhanger tears the paper off his walls on the same principle. The hackney coachman flings Bonichon into his cab, takes him for a four hours' drive, and charges accordingly. A dentist imitates the tactics of Peter the Great with his courtiers, forces him into a chair and operates upon his grinders, though, unlike Peter, he claims the full fee. A dozen or so of modistes and dressmakers invade his apartments with double the number of gowns for Madame Eve Bonichon, who, the reverse of her husband, does not object to this violent appeal for her custom. Perhaps Madame Octave, a charming woman who played the part, did well to submit, because during the first tableau, the audience, though by no means squeamish, had come to the conclusion that Madame Eve would be all the better for a little more clothing.

And so the piece goes on. The first performance took place twelve days before the presidential election, when Cavaignac was still at the head of affairs. Notwithstanding his energetic suppression of the disorders in June, every one, with the exception of the journalistic swashbucklers of *Le National*, hoped to get rid of him; and a song aimed at him cruelly dissected his utter insignificance from a mental, moral, and political point of view. When Louis-Napoleon gained the day, the song was changed for a more kindly one.

It is no exaggeration to say that during those days France was absolutely governed by the *National*. I made a list, by no means complete, at the time, of the various appointments and high places that had fallen to the members of the staff and those connected with

it financially and otherwise. I have kept it, and transcribe it here with scarcely any comment.

Armand Marrast, the editor, became a member of the Provisional Government, Mayor of Paris, and subsequently President of the National Assembly.

Marrast (No. 2) became Procureur-General at Pau.

Marrast (No. 3), who had been a captain of light horse during the reign of Louis-Philippe, was given a colonelcy unattached.

Marrast (No. 4) became Vice-Principal of the Lycée Corneille.

Bastide, one of the staff, became Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Vaulabelle, one of the staff, became Minister of Public Education.

Goudchaux, the banker of the *National*, became Minister of Finances.

Recurt, the chief physician to the staff, became Minister of the Interior and subsequently Minister of Public Works (President of the Board of Works).

Trélat, another physician, became Minister of Public Works.

Marie, the solicitor to the *National*, became a member of the Provisional Government, a member of the Executive Committee, and subsequently Minister of Justice.

Génin, one of the staff, became chief of the literary department at the Ministry of Public Education.

Charras, one of the staff, became Under-Secretary of State, at the Ministry for War.

Degouve-Denuncques, one of the staff, became Prefect of the Département of the Somme.

Buchez, third physician and an occasional contributor, became Deputy Mayor of Paris and subsequently President of the Assembly up to the 15th of May (when he had to make room for M. Armand Marrast himself). As will be seen, within a month of the republicans' advent to power, M. Buchez had been raised to one of the highest functions in the State, though absolutely devoid of any political or parliamentary talent, as was shown later on by his "*Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française*," an utterly commonplace production.

Dussart, one of the staff, became Prefect of the Seine-Inférieure.

Adam, one of the staff, became Chief Secretary of the Prefecture of the Seine.

Sain de Bois-le Comte, one of the staff, became minister plenipotentiary at Turin.

Félicien Mallefille, one of the staff, became minister plenipotentiary at Lisbon.

Anselme Petétin, one of the staff, became minister plenipotentiary at Hanover.

Auguste Petétin (his brother), one of the staff, became Prefect of the Department of the Côte-d'Or.

Frédéric Lacroix, one of the staff, became chief secretary for civil affairs in Algeria.

Hetzel, one of the staff, became chief secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Rousset, one of the staff, became Prefect of the Department of the Loire.

Duclerc, shorthand reporter, became for a little while Minister of Finances.

Pagnerre, publisher of the *National*, and bookseller, became a mayor, a member of the Provisional Govern-

ment, a member of the Executive Committee, and finally Director of the Comptoir d'Escompte.

Achille Grégoire, the printer of the *National*, became Prefect of the Department of the Upper-Saône.

Clément Thomas, called the Constable of the *National*, became the Commander-in-chief of the National Guard of the Seine.

There are a few score more, friends and allies, such as Lalanne, who was made director of the national workshops; Levrault, who was sent to Naples as minister plenipotentiary; Carette, who became Civil-Chief at Constantine; Carteron, who was appointed keeper of the national archives, etc.

As a matter of course, all these adventurers had revolving around them a number of satellites, as eager as the former to reap the fruits of the situation. Most of them, like the cat of Heine's epigram, had to devour their steak raw; they did not know how to cook it. Ministers, prefects, and high dignitaries of State as they were, they felt awkward in the society of those to whom no illusion was possible with regard to their origin and that of their political fortunes.

They haunted, therefore, by preference, the less well frequented restaurants and cafés, the wings of the minor theatres, on the pretext that they were the elect of the people, and that the people were their fittest companions. Their erstwhile leader and chief scorned to stoop to such tricks. He was an educated man, with a thick veneer of the gentleman about him, which, however, did not prevent him from being one of the two most arrant snobs I have met anywhere. I advisedly say anywhere, for France herself does not

produce that objectionable genus to any appreciable extent. You may find a good many cads, you will find comparatively few snobs. Compared to Armand Marrast, Eugène Sue was nowhere as a snob. He was a thickset man with a rubicund face, with a mass of grey woolly hair and a kind of stubbly, small moustache. His manners were supposed to be modelled on those of the nobles of the old régime; said manners mainly consisting of swaggering impudence to those whom he considered his equals, and freezing insolence to those he deemed his inferiors. The latter, I need not say, were by far the most numerous. He who bellowed most loudly that birth should carry no privilege, never forgot to remind his hearers, by deeds, if not by words, that he was of noble descent. "Si sa famille était noble, sa mère s'est sûrement endormie dans l'antichambre un jour qu'un valet-de-chambre entreprenant était trop près," said the Marquis d'Arragon one evening.* He felt greatly flattered at the caricaturists of the day representing him in the court dress of Louis XVI.'s reign, though to most people he looked like a "marquis de quatre sous."†

He professed to be very fond of antique furniture and decorations, and this fondness was the main cause of his ousting his former subaltern, Buchez, from the presidential chair of the Assembly, for, shortly before the revolution of '48, the official residence of that functionary had been put in thorough repair, its magnificent furniture had been restored, etc.

* The remark was not original. The Marquise d'Espreménil said it of herself when she saw her son join the Revolution of '89.—ERROR.

† The peripatetic vendors of songs, dressed as nobles, who up till '60 were frequently singing their compositions in the street.—ERROR.

The depression of business inspired M. Armand Marrast with the happy thought of giving some entertainments in the hope of reviving it. During the Third Republic, though I had ceased to live in France permanently, I have seen a good many motley gatherings at the Elysée-Bourbon, and at the Hôtel-de-Ville, especially in M. Grévy's time, though Mac-Mahon's presidency offered some diverting specimens also; but I have never seen anything like the social functions at the Palais-Bourbon during the months of September, October, and November, 1848. They were absolutely the festive scenes of Paul de Kock on a large scale, amidst Louis XIV. and Louis XV. furniture, instead of the bourgeois mahogany, and with an exquisitely artistic background, instead of the commonplace paperhangings of the lower middle-class dwellings. The corps diplomatique was virtually on the horns of a dilemma. After the February revolution, the shock of which was felt throughout the whole of Europe, and caused most of the sovereigns to shake on their thrones, it had stood by M. de Lamartine, and even by his successor at the French Foreign Office, M. Bastide, if not with enthusiasm, at least with a kind of complacency. The republic proclaimed by the former, might, after all, contain elements of vitality. The terrible disorders in June tended to shake this reluctant confidence; still, there was but little change in the ambassadors' outward attitude, until it became too evident that, unless a strong dictator should intervene, mob rule was dangerously nigh. Then the corps diplomatique began to hold aloof. Of course there were exceptions, such as, for instance, Mr. Richard Rush, the minister of the United States, who

had been the first to congratulate the Provisional Government, and the various representatives of the South-American republics; but even the latter could scarcely refrain from expressing their astonishment at the strange company in which they found themselves. The women were perhaps the most remarkable, as women generally are when out of their element. The greater part had probably never been in a drawing-room before, and, notwithstanding M. Taine's subsequently expressed dictum about the facility with which a Parisien grisette, shopwoman, or lady's-maid may be transformed at a few moments into a semblance of a *grande dame*, these very petites bourgeoises and their demoiselles made a very indifferent show. Perhaps the grisette, shopwoman, or lady's-maid would have acquitted herself better. Her natural taste, sharpened by constant contact with her social superiors, might have made up for the slender resources of her wardrobe; and, as the French say, "one forgives much in the way of solecism to the prettily dressed woman." As it was, the female section of M. Marrast's guests could advance no valid plea for mercy on that score. The daughters looked limp with their choregraphic exertions: the emblem of innocence, "la sainte mousseline," as Ambroise Thomas called it afterwards, hung in vague, undefined folds on angular figures, perhaps because the starch necessary to it had been appropriated by the matrons. The latter were rigid to a degree, and looked daggers at their spouses and their friends at the slightest attempt to stir them to animation. "Fais donc danser ma vieille," was the consecrated formula with which a not very eager cavalier was dragged to the

seat where said "vieille" was reposing in all the majesty of her unaccustomed finery, considerably impaired in the wearer's transit on foot from her domicile at Montrouge or Ménilmontant to the banks of the Seine; for the weather that year was almost tropical, even in the autumn, and consequently the cab had been dispensed with. It would appear, from a remark I overheard, that Jehu, in the way of business, preferred as fares the partisans of and adherents to the fallen régimes, even of the latest one. Said a portly dame to her neighbour, alluding to the cabman, "Il a absolument refusé de nous prendre. Il a dit qu'il était dans l'opposition, et qu'il ne voulait pas trahir ses principes à moins de dix francs. Dix francs, ma chère, nous aurions pu souper chez nous, et sans compter les frais de toilette et de blanchissage. Quant à l'honneur d'être ici, ça ne compte pas pour grand'chose, vu que tout le quartier y est; nous demeurons à Batignolles, et il a fallu descendre en ville ce matin pour avoir une paire de gants blancs. Chez nous, partout la même réponse: 'Des gants blancs, madame, nous n'en avons plus. Presque toutes les dames du quartier vont au Palais-Bourton ce soir, et depuis hier il nous reste que des petites pointures (sizes), des sept et des sept et demies.'"

As for the "élu du peuple souverain," when he had failed to draw his "vieille" into the mazy dance, and been snubbed for his pains in the bargain, he returned to his fellow-deputies, many of whom might be easily recognized by the golden-fringed tricolour rosette in their buttonholes, though some had merely kept it in their pockets. The "élu du peuple" did not dance

himself. Perhaps the most curious group was that of the young attachés and clerks of the Foreign Office who had come to enjoy themselves, who, even at that time, were nearly all of good birth, and who, to use a colloquial expression, looked not unlike brass knockers on a pigsty. This was the society Louis-Napoleon was to sweep away with the aid of men, some of whom I have endeavoured to sketch in subsequent notes. I would fain say a few words of a "shipwrecked one," of the preceding dynasty, whose acquaintance I did not make until the vessel he had steered so long had foundered, and of the self-constituted pilot of the interim régime. I am alluding to MM. Guizot and de Lamartine.

CHAPTER II.

Guizot, Lamartine, and Béranger—Public opinion at sea with regard to the real Guizot—People fail to see the real man behind the politician—Guizot regrets this false conception—"I have not the courage to be unpopular"—A tilt at Thiers—My first meeting with him—A picture and the story connected with it—M. Guizot "at home"—His apartment—The company—M. Guizot on "the Spanish marriages"—His indictment against Lord Palmerston—An incident in connection with Napoleon's tomb at the Invalides—Nicolas I. and Napoleon—My subsequent intimacy with M. Guizot—Guizot as a father—His correspondence with his daughters—A story of Henry Mürger and Marguerite Thuillier—M. Guizot makes up his mind not to live in Paris any longer—M. Guizot on "natural scenery"—Never saw the sea until he was over fifty—Why M. Guizot did not like the country; why M. Thiers did not like it—Thiers the only man at whom Guizot tilted—M. Guizot died poor—M. de Lamartine's poverty did not inspire the same respect—Lamartine's impecuniosity—My only visit to Lamartine's house—Du Jellaby doré—With a difference—All the stories and anecdotes about M. de Lamartine relate to his improvidence and impecuniosity—Ten times worse in that respect than Balzac—M. Guizot's literary productions and M. de Lamartine's—The national subscription raised for the latter—How he anticipates some of the money—Béranger—My first acquaintance with him—Béranger's verdict on the Second Republic—Béranger's constant flittings—Dislikes popularity—The true story of Béranger and Mdle. Judith Frère.

THAT sentence of Louis-Philippe to Lord —, quoted elsewhere: "Guizot is so terribly respectable; I am afraid there is a mistake either about his nationality or his respectability, for they are badly matched," reflected the opinion of the majority of Frenchmen with regard to the eminent statesman. The historian who was supposed to know Cromwell and Washington as well as if he had lived with them, was credited at

last with being a stern rigid Puritan in private life like the first, impatient of contradiction like the second,—in short, a kind of walking copy-book moral, who never unbent, whose slightest actions were intended by him to convey a lesson to the rest of mankind. Unable to devote much time to her during the week, Guizot was in the habit of taking his mother for a stroll in the Park of St. Cloud on Sundays. The French, who are never tired of shouting, “Oh, ma mère! oh, ma mère!” resented such small attentions on the part of the son, because, they maintained, they were meant as exhibitions. Even such a philosopher as Ernest Renan failed to see that there were two dissimilar men in Guizot, the Guizot of public life and the Guizot of home life; that, behind the imperious, haughty, battlesome orator of the Chamber, with his almost marble mask, there was a tender and loving heart, capable of the most deep-seated devotion; that the cares of State once thrown off, the supercilious stare melted like ice beneath the sun of spring into a prepossessing smile, captivating every one with whom he came in contact.

Guizot regretted this erroneous conception the world had formed of his character. “But what can I do?” he asked. “In reality, I haven’t the courage to be unpopular any more than other people; but neither have I the courage to prance about in my own drawing-room as if I were on wires”—this was a slight slap at M. Thiers,—“nor can I write on subjects with which I have no sympathy”—that was a second,—“and I should cut but a sorry figure on horseback”—that was a third;—“consequently people who, I am sure, wish me well, but who will not come and see me at home,

hold me up as a misanthrope, while I know that I am nothing of the kind."

With this he took from his table an article by M. Renan on the first volume of his "*Mémoires*," an article couched in the most flattering terms, but giving the most conventional portrait of the author himself. "Why doesn't he come and see me? He would soon find that I am not the solitary, tragic, buckram figure that has already become legendary, and which, like most legendary figures, is absolutely false."

This conversation—or rather monologue, for I was careful not to interrupt him—took place in the early part of the Second Empire, in the house in the Rue de la Ville-Levêque he occupied for five and twenty years, and until 1860. The Coup d'Etat had irretrievably shattered Guizot's political career. It had destroyed whatever hopes may have remained after the flight of Louis-Philippe. Consequently Guizot's proper place is among the men of that reign; the reason why I insert him here is because my acquaintance with him only began after his disappearance from public life.

It occurred in this way. One evening, after dinner at M. de Morny's, we were talking about pictures, and especially about those of the Spanish school, when our host turned to me. "Have you ever seen 'the Virgin' belonging to M. Guizot?" he asked. I told him I had not. "Then go and see it," he said. "It is one of the finest specimens of its kind I ever saw, I might say the finest." Next day I asked permission of M. Guizot to come and see it, and, almost by return of post, I received an invitation for the following Thursday night to one of his "at homes."

Until then I had never met M. Guizot, except at one of his ministerial soirées under the preceding dynasty. The apartment offered nothing very striking: the furniture was of the ordinary kind to be found in almost every bourgeois drawing-room, with this difference—that it was considerably shabbier; for Guizot was poor all his life. The man who had said to the nation, "Enrichissez vous, enrichissez vous," had never acted upon the advice himself. I know for a fact that, while he was in power, he was asked to appoint to the post of receiver-general of the Gironde one of the richest financiers in France, who had expressed the intention to share the magnificent benefits of the appointment with him. M. Guizot simply and steadfastly refused to do anything of the kind.

On the evening in question, a lamp with a reflector was placed in front of the picture I had come to see, probably in my honour. M. de Morny had not exaggerated the beauty of it, but it bore no signature, and M. Guizot himself had no idea with regard to the painter. "There is a curious story connected with it," he said, "but I cannot tell it you now; come and see me one morning and I will. As an Englishman it will interest you; especially if you will take the trouble to read between the lines. I will tell you a few more, perhaps, but the one connected with the picture is 'la bonne bouche.'"

The company at M. Guizot's, on that and other occasions, mainly consisted of those who had been vanquished in the recent struggle with Louis-Napoleon, or thought they had been; for a great many were mere word-spinners, who had been quite as vehement in their denunciations of the man they were now sur-

rounding when he was in power, as they were in their diatribes against the man who, after all, saved France for eighteen years from anarchy, and did not indulge more freely in nepotism, peculation, and kindred amenities than those who came after him. But, at the outset of these notes, I took the resolution to eschew politics, and I will endeavour to keep it as far as possible.

As a matter of course, I soon availed myself of M. Guizot's permission to call upon him in the morning, and it was then that he told me the following story connected with the picture.

"After the Spanish marriages, Queen Isabella wished to convey to me a signal mark of her gratitude—for what, Heaven alone knows, because it is the only political transaction I would willingly efface from my career. So she conferred upon me the dukedom of San Antonio, and sent me the patent with a most affectionate letter. Honestly speaking, I was more than upset by this proof of royal kindness, seeing that I had not the least wish to accept the title. I felt equally reluctant to offend her by declining the high distinction offered, I felt sure, from a most generous feeling. I went to see the King, and explained my awkward position, adding that the name of Guizot was all-sufficient for me. 'You are right,' said the King. 'Leave the matter to me; I'll arrange it.' And he did, much to the disgust of M. de Salvandy, who had received a title at the same time, but who could not accept his while the Prime Minister declined.

"Then she sent me this picture. Some witty journalist said, at the time, that it was symbolical of her own married state; for let me tell you that the unfitness of Don Francis d'Assis was 'le secret de poli-

chinelle,' however much your countrymen may have insisted that it only leaked out after the union. Personally I was entirely opposed to it, and, in fact, it was not a ministerial question at all, but one of court intrigue. Lord Palmerston chose to make it the former, and he, and your countrymen through him, are not only morally but virtually responsible for the subsequent errors of Isabella. Do you know what his ultimatum was when the marriage had been contracted, when there was no possibility of going back? You do not. Well, then, I will tell you. 'If Isabella has not a child within a twelvemonth, then there will be war between England and France.' I leave you to ponder the consequences for yourself, though I assure you that I washed my hands of the affair from that moment. But the French as well as the English would never believe me, and history will record that 'the austere M. Guizot,' for that is what they choose to call me, 'lent his aid to proceedings which would make the most debased pander blush with shame.'

"It is not the only time that my intentions have been purposely misconceived and misconstrued; nay, I have been taxed with things of which I was as innocent as a child. In 1846, almost at the same period that the Spanish imbroglio took place, Count de Montalembert got up in the Upper House one day and declared it a disgrace that France should have begged the tomb of Napoleon I. from Russia. Now, the fact was that France had not begged anything at all. The principal part of the monument at the Invalides is the sarcophagus. The architect Visconti was anxious that it should consist of red porphyry; M. Duchâtel and myself were of the same opinion.

Unfortunately, we had not the remotest notion where such red porphyry was to be found. The Egyptian quarries, whence the Romans took it, were exhausted. Inquiries were made in the Vosges, in the Pyrenees, but without result, and we were going to abandon the porphyry, when news arrived at the Ministry of the Interior that the kind of stone we wanted existed in Russia.

"Just then my colleague, M. de Salvandy, was sending M. Léouzon le Duc to the north on a special mission, and I instructed him to go as far as St. Petersburg and consult Count de Rayneval, our ambassador, as to the best means of getting the porphyry. A few months later, M. le Duc sent me specimens of a stone from a quarry on the banks of the Onega Lake, which, if not absolutely porphyry, was the nearest to it to be had. M. Visconti having approved of it, I forwarded further instructions for the quantity required, and so forth.

"The quarry, it appears, belonged to the Crown, and had never been worked, could not be worked, without due permission and the payment of a certain tax. After a great many formalities, mainly raised by speculators who had got wind of the affair, and had bribed various officials to oppose, or, at any rate, intercept the petition sent by M. le Duc for the necessary authorization, Prince Volkonsky, the Minister of State, acquainted the Czar himself with the affair, and Nicholas, without a moment's hesitation, granted the request, remitting the tax which M. le Duc had estimated at about six thousand francs. This took place at a cabinet council, and, unfortunately for me, the Czar thought fit to make a little speech. 'What a

strange destiny!’ he said, rising from his seat and assuming a solemn tone—‘what a strange destiny this man’s’—alluding to Napoleon—‘even in death! It is we who struck him the first fatal blow, by the burning of our holy and venerable capital, and it is from us that France asks his tomb. Let the French envoy have everything he requires, and, above all, let no tax be taken.’

“That was enough; the German and French papers got hold of the last words with the rest; they confounded the tax with the cost of working, which amounted to more than two hundred thousand francs; and up to this day, notwithstanding the explanations I and my colleagues offered in reply to the interpellation of M. de Montalembert, the story remains that Russia made France a present of the tomb of Napoleon.”

From that day forth I often called upon M. Guizot, especially in the daytime, when I knew that he had finished working; for when he found that his political career was irrevocably at an end, he turned very cheerfully—I might say gladly—to his original avocation, literature. Without the slightest fatigue, without the slightest worry, he produced a volume of philosophical essays or history every year; and if, unlike Alexandre Dumas, he did not roar with laughter while composing, he was often heard to hum a tune. “En effet,” said one of his daughters, the Countess Henriette de Witt (both his daughters bore the same name and titles when married), “notre père ne chante presque jamais qu’en travaillant.” This did not mean that work, and work only, had the effect of putting M. Guizot in good humour. He was, according to the same authority, uniformly sweet-tempered at home, whether sitting

in his armchair, surrounded by his family, or gently strolling up and down his library. "C'est la politique qui le rendait méchant," said Madame de Witt, "heureusement il la laissait à la porte. Et très souvent il l'oubliait de parti-pris au milieu du conseil et alors il nous écrivait des lettres, mais des lettres, comme on n'en écrit plus. En voilà deux qu'il m'a écrites lorsque j'étais très jeune fille." Whereupon she showed me what were really two charming gossiping little essays on the art of punctuation. It appears that the little lady was either very indifferent to, or ignorant of, the art; and the father wrote, "My dear Henriette, I am afraid I shall still have to take you to task with regard to your punctuation: there is little or none of it in your letters. All punctuation, commas or other signs, mark a period of repose for the mind—a stage more or less long,—an idea which is done with or momentarily suspended, and which is being divided by such a sign from the next. You suppress those periods, those intervals; you write as the stream flows, as the arrow flies. That will not do at all, because the ideas one expresses, the things of which we speak, are not all intimately connected with one another like drops of water."

The second letter showed that Mdlle. Guizot must have taken her revenge, either very cleverly, or that she was past all redemption in the matter of punctuation; and as the latter theory is scarcely admissible, knowing what we do of her after-life, we must admit the former. The letter ran as follows:—

"MY DEAR HENRIETTE,

"I dare say you will find me very provoking, but let me beg of you not to fling so many commas at

my head. You are absolutely pelting me with them, as the Romans pelted that poor Tarpeia with their bucklers."

It reminds one of Marguerite Thuillier, who "created Mimi" in Mürger and Barrière's "*Vie de Bohème*," when Mürger fell in love with her. "I can't do with him," she said to his collaborateur, who pleaded for him,—“I can't do with him; he is too badly dressed, he looks like a scarecrow.” Barrière advised his friend to go to a good tailor and have himself rigged out in the latest fashion. The advice was acted upon; Barrière waited anxiously for the effect of the transformation upon the lady's heart. A fortnight elapsed, and poor Mürger was snubbed as usual. Barrière interceded once more. "I can do less with him than before," was the answer; "he is too well dressed, he looks like a tailor's dummy."

To return to M. Guizot, whom, in the course of the whole of our acquaintance, I have only seen once "put out." It was when the fiat went forth that his house was to come down to make room for the new Boulevard Malesherbes. The authorities had been as considerate as possible; they had made no attempt to treat the eminent historian as a simple owner of house-property fighting to get the utmost value; they offered him three hundred thousand francs, and M. Guizot himself acknowledged that the sum was a handsome one. "But I have got thirty thousand volumes to remove, besides my notes and manuscripts," he wailed. Then his good temper got the better of him, and he had a "sly dig" at his former adversary, Adolphe Thiers. "Serves me right for having so many books; happy the historian who prefers to trust to his imagination."

M. Guizot made up his mind to have his library removed to Val-Richer, and never to live in Paris again; but his children and friends prevailed upon him not to forsake society altogether, and to take a modest apartment near his old domicile, in the Faubourg St. Honoré, opposite the English embassy, which, however, in those days had not the monumental aspect it has at present.

"It is doubtful," said M. Guizot afterwards to me, "whether the idea of living in the country would have ever entered my mind ten or fifteen years ago. At that time, I would not have gone a couple of miles to see the most magnificent bit of natural scenery: I should have gone a thousand to see a man of talent."

And, in fact, up till 1830, when he was nearly forty-four, he had never seen the sea, "And if it had not been for an electoral journey to Normandy, I might not have seen it then." I pointed out to him that M. Thiers had never had a country house; that he did not seem to care for nature, for birds, or for flowers.

"Ah, that's different," he smiled. "I did not care much about the country, because I had never seen any of it. Thiers does not like it, because the birds, the flowers, the trees, live and grow without his interference, and he does not care that anything on earth should happen without his having a hand in it."

Thiers was the only man at whom M. Guizot tilted in that way. Though brought up in strict Protestant, one might almost say Calvinistic principles, he was an ardent admirer of Roman Catholicism, which he called "the most admirable school of respect in the world." No man had suffered more from the excesses of the first Revolution, seeing that his father perished

on the scaffold, yet I should not like to say that he was not somewhat of a republican at heart, but not of a republic "which begins with Plato, and necessarily ends with a gendarme." "The republic of '48," he used to say, "it had not even a Monk, let alone a Washington or a Cromwell; and Louis-Napoleon had to help himself to the throne. And depend upon it, if there had been a Cromwell, he would have crushed it as the English one crushed the monarchy. As for Washington, he would not have meddled with it at all."

"Yes," he said on another occasion, "I am proud of one thing—of the authorship of the law on elementary education; but, proud as I am of it, if I could have foreseen the uses to which it has been put, to which it is likely to be put when I am gone, I would have sooner have seen half of the nation unable to distinguish an 'A from a bull's foot,' as your countrymen say."

With Guizot died almost the last French statesman, "who not only thought that he had the privilege to be poor, but who carried the privilege too far;" as some one remarked when he heard the news of his demise. Towards the latter years of his life, he occupied a modest apartment, on the fourth floor, in the Rue Billaut (now the Rue Washington). Well might M. de Falloux exclaim, as he toiled up that staircase, "My respect for him increases with every step I take."

Since M. de Falloux uttered these words, and very long before, I have only known one French statesman whose staircase and whose poverty might perhaps inspire the same reflections and elicit similar praise. I am alluding to M. Rouher.

M. de Lamartine's poverty did not breed the same respect. There was no dignity about it. It was the

poverty of Oliver Goldsmith sending to Dr. Johnson and feasting with the guinea the latter had forwarded by the messenger pending his own arrival. Méry had summed up the situation with regard to Lamartine's difficulties on the evening of the 24th of February, '48, and there is no reason to suspect that his statement had been exaggerated. The dynasty of the younger branch of the Bourbons had been overthrown because Lamartine saw no other means of liquidating the 350,000 francs he still owed for his princely journey to the East. I had been to Lamartine's house once before that revolution, and, though his wife was an Englishwoman, I felt no inclination to return thither. The household gave me the impression of "Du Jellaby doré." The sight of it would have furnished Dickens with as good a picture as the one he sketched. The principal personage, however, was not quite so disinterested as the future mother-in-law of Prince Turveydrop. Of course, at that time, there was no question of a republic, but the politics advocated and discussed during the lunch were too superfine for humble mortals like myself, who instinctively felt that—

"Quelques billets de mille francs feraient bien mieux l'affaire"

of the host. And the instinct was not a deceptive one. Four months after February, 1848, M. de Lamartine had virtually ceased to exist, as far as French politics were concerned. From that time until the day of his death, the world only heard of him in connection with a new book or new poem, the avowed purpose of which was, not to make the world better or wiser, but to raise money. He kept singing like the benighted musician on the Russian steppes

keeps playing his instrument, to keep away the wolves.

I knew not one but a dozen men, all of whom visited M. de Lamartine. I have never been able to get a single story or anecdote about him, not bearing upon the money question. He is ten times worse in that respect than Balzac, with this additional point in the latter's favour—that he never whines to the outside world about his impecuniosity. M. Guizot produces a volume every twelvemonth, and asks nothing of any one; he leaves the advertising of it to his publisher: M. de Lamartine spends enormous sums in publicity, and subsidizes, besides, a crowd of journalists, who devour his creditors' substance while he keeps repeating to them that his books do not sell. "If, henceforth, I were to offer pearls dissolved in the cup of Cleopatra, people would use the decoction to wash their horses' feet." And, all the while, people bought his works, though no one cared to read the later ones. The golden lyre of yore was worse than dumb; it emitted false and weak sounds, the strings had become relaxed, the golden tongue alone remained.

When a national subscription is raised to pay his debts, the committee are so afraid of his wasting the money that they decide to have the proceeds deposited at the Comptoir d'Escompte, and that de Lamartine shall not be able to draw a farthing until all his affairs are settled. One morning he deputed a friend to ask for forty thousand francs, in order to pay some bills that are due. They refuse to advance the money. De Lamartine invites them to his own house, but they stand firm at first. Gradually they give way. "How much do you really want?" is the question

asked at last. "Fifty thousand francs," is the answer; "but I fancy I shall be able to manage with thirty thousand francs."

"If we gave you fifty thousand francs," says M. Emile Pereire, "would you give us some breathing-time?"

"Yes."

And Lamartine pockets the fifty thousand francs, thanks to his eloquence.

A better man, though not so great a poet, was Béranger, whom I knew for many years, though my intimacy with him did not commence until a few months after the February revolution, when I met him coming out of the Palais-Bourbon. "I shall feel obliged," he said, "if you will see me home, for I am not at all well; these violent scenes are not at all to my taste." Then, with a very wistful smile, he went on: "I have been accused of having held 'the plank across the brook over which Louis-Philippe went to the Tuileries.' I wish I could be the bridge across the channel on which he would return now. Certainly I would have liked a republic, but not such a one as we are having in there," pointing to the home of the Constituent Assembly. A short while after, Béranger tendered his resignation as deputy.

He lived at Passy then, in the Rue Basse; the number, if I mistake not, was twenty-three. He had lived in the same quarter fifteen years before, for I used to see him take his walks when I was a lad, but it was difficult for Béranger to live in the same spot for any length of time. He was, first of all, of a very nomadic disposition; secondly, his quondam friends would leave him no peace. There was a

constant inroad of shady individuals who, on the pretext that he was "the people's poet," drained his purse and his cellar. Previous to his return to Passy, he had been boarding with a respectable widow in the neighbourhood of Vincennes. He had adopted the name of Bonnin, and his landlady took him to be a modest, retired tradesman, living upon a small annuity. When his birthday came round, she and her daughters found out that they had entertained an angel unawares, for carriage after carriage drove up, and in a few hours the small dwelling was filled with magnificent flowers, the visitors meanwhile surrounding Béranger, and offering him their congratulations. As a matter of course, the rumour spread, and Béranger fled to Passy, where he invited Mdlle. Judith Frère to join him once more. The retreat had been discovered, and he resigned himself to be badgered more than usual for the sake of the neighbourhood—the Bois de Boulogne was hard by; but the municipal council of Passy, in consideration of the honour conferred upon the arrondissement and Béranger's charity, took it into their heads to pass a resolution offering Béranger the most conspicuous place in the cemetery for a tomb. The poet fled once more, this time to the Quartier-Latin; but the students insisting on pointing him out to their female companions, who, in their enthusiasm, made it a point of embracing him on every possible occasion, especially in the "Closerie des Lilas"—for to the end Béranger remained fond of the society of young folk,—Béranger was compelled to flit once more. After a short stay in the Rue Vendôme, in the neighbourhood of the Temple, he came to the Quartier-Beaujon, where I visited him.



There have been so many tales with regard to Béranger's companion, Mdlle. Judith Frère, and all equally erroneous, that I am glad to be able to rectify them. Mdlle. Frère was by no means the kind of upper servant she was generally supposed to be. A glance at her face and a few moments spent in her company could not fail to convince any one that she was of good birth. She had befriended Béranger when he was very young, they had parted for some time, and they ended their days together, for the poet only survived his friend three months. Béranger was a model of honesty and disinterestedness. Ambition he had little or none; he was somewhat fond of teasing children, not because he had no affection for them, but because he loved them too much. His portrait by Ary Scheffer is the most striking likeness I have ever seen; but a better one still, perhaps, is by an artist who had probably never set eyes on him. I am alluding to Hablot Browne, who unconsciously reproduced him to the life in the picture of Tom Pinch. As a companion, Béranger was charming to a degree. I have never heard him say a bitter word. The day I saw him home, I happened to say to him, "You ought to be pleased, Victor Hugo is in the same regiment with you." "Yes," he answered, "he is in the band." He would never accept a pension from Louis-Napoleon, but he had no bitterness against him. Lamartine was very bitter, and yet consented to the Emperor's heading of the subscription-list in his behalf. That alone would show the difference between the two men.

CHAPTER III.

Some men of the Empire—Fialin de Persigny—The public prosecutor's opinion of him expressed at the trial for high treason in 1836—Superior in many respects to Louis-Napoleon—The revival of the Empire his only and constant dream—In order to realize it, he appeals first to Jérôme, ex-King of Westphalia—De Persigny's estimate of him—Jérôme's greed and Louis-Napoleon's generosity—De Persigny's financial embarrassments—His charity—What the Empire really meant to him—De Persigny virtually the moving spirit in the Coup d'Etat—Louis-Napoleon might have been satisfied with the presidency of the republic for life—Persigny seeks for aid in England—Palmerston's share in the Coup d'Etat—The submarine cable—Preparations for the Coup d'Etat—A warning of it sent to England—Count Walewski issues invitations for a dinner-party on the 2nd of December—Opinion in London that Louis-Napoleon will get the worst in the struggle with the Chamber—The last funds from London—General de Saint-Arnaud and Baron Lacrosse—The Elysée-Bourbon on the evening of the 1st of December—I pass the Elysée at midnight—Nothing unusual—London on the 2nd of December—The dinner at Count Walewski's put off at the last moment—Illuminations at the French Embassy a few hours later—Palmerston at the Embassy—Some traits of De Persigny's character—His personal affection for Louis-Napoleon—Madame de Persigny—Her parsimony—Her cooking of the household accounts—Chevet and Madame de Persigny—What the Empire might have been with a Von Moltke by the side of the Emperor instead of Vaillant, Niel, and Lebœuf—Colonel (afterwards General) Fleury the only modest man among the Emperor's entourage—De Persigny's pretensions as a Heaven-born statesman—Mgr. de Mérode—De Morny—His first meeting with his half-brother—De Morny as a grand seigneur—The origin of the Mexican campaign—Walewski—His fads—Rouher—My first sight of him in the Quartier-Latin—The Emperor's opinion of him at the beginning of his career—Rouher in his native home, Auvergne—His marriage—Madame Rouher—His father-in-law.

“A MAN endowed with a strong will and energy, active and intelligent to a degree, with the faculty of turning up at every spot where his presence was

necessary either to revive the lagging plot or to gain fresh adherents; a man better acquainted than all the rest with the secret springs upon which the conspiracy hung."

This description of M. de Persigny is borrowed from the indictment at the trial for high treason in 1836. Every particular of it is correct, yet it is a very one-sided diagnosis of the character of Napoleon's staunchest henchman. If I had had to paint him morally and mentally in one line, I should, without intending to be irreverent, have called him the John the Baptist of the revived Napoleonic legend. There could be no doubt about his energy, his activity, and his intelligence; in respect of the former two he was absolutely superior to Louis-Napoleon, but they, the activity and energy and intelligence, would only respond to the bidding of one voice, that of the first Napoleon from the grave, which, he felt sure, had appointed him the chief instrument for the restoration of the Empire. It was the dream that haunted his sleep, that pursued him when awake. Let it not be thought, though, that Louis-Napoleon appeared to him as the one selected by Providence to realize that dream. Loyal and faithful as he was to him from the day they met until his (Persigny's) death, he would have been equally loyal and faithful, though perhaps not so deeply attached, to Jérôme, the ex-King of Westphalia, to whom he appealed first. But the youngest of the great Napoleon's brothers did not relish adventures, and he turned a deaf ear to Persigny's proposals, as he did later on to those of M. Thiers, who wished him to become a candidate for the presidency of the Second Republic.

I was talking one day on the subject of the latter's refusal to De Persigny, several years after the advent of the Empire, and commending Jérôme for his abnegation of self and his fealty to his nephew. There was a sneer on Persigny's face such as I had never seen there before; for though he was by no means good-tempered, and frequently very violent, he generally left the members of the Imperial family alone. He noticed my surprise, and explained at once. "It is very evident that you do not know Jérôme, nor did I until a few years ago. There is not a single one of the great Napoleon's brothers who really had his glory at heart; it meant money and position to them, that is all. Do you know why Jérôme did not fall in with my views and those of M. Thiers? Well, I will tell you. He was afraid that his nephew Louis and the rest of the family would be a burden on him; he preferred that others should take the chestnuts out of the fire and that he should have the eating of them. That is what his self-abnegation meant, nothing more."

I am afraid that De Persigny was not altogether wrong in his estimate of the ex-King of Westphalia. He was insatiable in his demands for money to his nephew. In fact, with the exception of Princesse Mathilde, the whole of the Emperor's family was a thorn in his side.

The Emperor himself was absolutely incapable of refusing a service. I have the following story on very good authority. De Persigny, who was as lavish as his Imperial master, was rarely ever out of difficulties, and in such emergencies naturally appealed to the latter. He had wasted on, or sunk enormous sum in, his country estate of Chamarande, where he entertained with

boundless hospitality. As a matter of course, he was always being pursued by his creditors. One early morn—Persigny always went betimes when he wanted money—he made his appearance in the Emperor's private room, looking sad and dejected. Napoleon refrained for a while from questioning him as to the cause of his low spirits, but finally ventured to say that he looked ill.

"Ah, sire," was the answer, "I am simply bent down with sorrow. This Chamarande, which I have created out of nothing as it were"—it had cost nearly two millions of francs—"is ruining me. I shall be forced to give it up."

De Persigny felt sure that he would be told there and then not to worry himself; but the Emperor was in a jocular mood, and took delight in prolonging his anxiety. "Believe me, my dear duc," said Napoleon with an assumed air of indifference, "it is the best thing you can do. Get rid of Chamarande; it is too great a burden, and you'll breathe more freely when it's gone."

De Persigny turned as white as a ghost; whereupon Napoleon, who was soft-hearted to a degree, took a bundle of notes from his drawer and handed them to him. De Persigny went away beaming.

It must not be inferred from this that De Persigny was grasping like Prince Jérôme and others, who constantly drained Napoleon's purse. De Persigny's charity was proverbial, but he gave blindly, and as a consequence, was frequently imposed upon. When young he had joined the Saint-Simoniens; his great aim was to make everybody happy. To him the restoration of the Empire meant not only the revival

of Napoleon's glory, but the era of universal happiness, of universal material prosperity. As a rule, he was thoroughly unpractical; the whole of his life's work may be summed up in one line—he conceived and organized the Coup d'Etat. As such he was virtually the founder of the Second Empire. In that task practice went hand in hand with theory; when the task was accomplished, his inspiration was utterly at fault.

Historians have been generally content to attribute the principal rôle in the Coup d'Etat, next to that of Louis-Napoleon, to M. de Morny. Of course, I am speaking of those who conceived it, not of those who executed it. The parts of Generals Magnan and De Saint-Arnaud, of Colonel de Bévillé and M. de Maupas, scarcely admit of discussion. But the fact is that De Morny did comparatively nothing as far as the conception was concerned. The prime mover was undoubtedly De Persigny, and it is a very moot question whether, but for him, it would have been conceived at all. I know I am treading on dangerous ground, but I have very good authority for the whole of the following notes relating to it. In De Persigny's mind the whole of the scheme was worked out prior to Louis-Napoleon's election to the presidency, though of course the success of it depended on that election. He did not want a republic, even with Louis-Napoleon as a president for life; he wanted an Empire. I should not like to affirm that Prince Louis would *not* have been content with such a position; it was Persigny who put down his foot, exclaiming, "*Aut Cæsar, aut nullus!*" That the sentence fell upon willing ears, there is equally no doubt, and when the Prince-President had

his foot upon the first rung of the ladder, he would probably have rushed, or endeavoured to rush, to the top at once, regardless of the risk involved in this perilous ascent, for there would have been no one, absolutely no one, to steady the ladder at the bottom. De Persigny held him back while he busied himself in finding not only the *personnel* that was to hold the latter, but the troops that would prevent the crowd from interfering with the ladder-holders. It was he who was the first to broach the recall of De Saint-Arnaud from Africa; it was he who drew attention to M. de Maupas, then little more than an obscure prefect; it was he who was wise enough to see that "the ladder-holders" would have to be sought for in England, and not in France. "The English," he said to Napoleon, "owe you a good turn for the harm they have done to your uncle. They are sufficiently generous or sufficiently sensible to do that good turn, if it is in their interest to do so; look for your support among the English."

I fancy it was Lord Palmerston's dislike of Louis-Philippe on account of "the Spanish marriages," rather than a sentiment of generosity towards Louis-Napoleon, that made him espouse his cause, but I feel certain that he did espouse it. I have good ground for saying that his interviews with Comte Walewski were much more frequent than his ministerial colleagues suspected, or the relations between England and France, however friendly they may have been, warranted. But everything was not ready. Palmerston and Walewski on the English side of the Channel, Louis-Napoleon and De Persigny on the French side, were waiting for something. What was it? Nothing more nor less than the laying of the submarine cable between Dover and

Calais, the concession for which was given on the 8th of January, 1851, and on which occasion the last words to Mr. Walker Breit were to hurry it on as much as possible, "*seeing that it is of the utmost importance for the French Government to be in direct and rapid communication with the Cabinet of St. James.*" The Cabinet meant Lord Palmerston. Nevertheless, it is not until ten months later that the cable is laid, and from that moment events march apace. Let us glance at them for a moment. Telegraphic communication between Dover and Calais is established on the 13th of November. On the 15th, General Saint-Arnaud gives orders that the decree of 1849, conferring on the president of the National Assembly the right of summoning and disposing of the military forces which had hitherto been hung up in every barracks throughout the land, shall be taken down. On the 16th, Changarnier, Leflo, and Baze, with many others, decide that a bill shall be introduced immediately, conferring once more that right on the president of the Assembly. The opponents of the Prince-President are already rubbing their hands with glee at the thought of their success, for it means that Prince Louis and his adherents will be in their power, and in their power means removal to Vincennes or elsewhere, as prisoners of State. On the 18th, the bill is thrown out by a majority of 108, and the Assembly is virtually powerless henceforth against any and every attack from the military. It was on that very evening that the date of the Coup d'Etat was fixed for the 2nd of December, notwithstanding the hesitation and wavering of Louis-Napoleon. On the 26th a young attaché is despatched from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the French Embassy in London

instead of the ordinary cabinet (or queen's) messenger, which proves that the despatches are more important than usual. They contain letters from the Prince-President himself to Comte Walewski, the contents of which are probably known to the Marquis de Turgot, but which are despatched in that way, instead of being sent directly from the Elysée by a trustworthy person, because the presidential residence is watched day and night by the "counter-police" of the Assembly. The reason why the Marquis de Turgot selects a young aristocrat is because he feels certain that he cannot be tampered with. On the 29th of November a connection of mine receives a letter from a friend in London, who is supposed to be behind the scenes, but who this time is utterly in the dark. It is to the following effect: "There is something in the wind, but I know not what. Both yesterday morning (27th) and to-day Walewski has been closeted for more than two hours each time with Palmerston. There is to be a grand dinner at Walewski's on the second of next month, to which I received an invitation. Can you tell me what mischief is brewing?"

The recipient of the letter was neither better nor worse informed than the rest of us, and in spite of all the assertions to the contrary which have been made since, no one foresaw the crisis in the shape it came upon us. On the contrary, the general opinion was that in the end Louis-Napoleon would get the worse, in spite of the magic influence of his name with the army. It was expected that if the troops were called upon to act against the National Assembly, they would refuse and turn against their leaders. I am by no means certain that the Prince-President

did not entertain a similar opinion up to the last moment, for I have it on excellent authority that as late as the 26th of November he endeavoured to postpone the affair for a month. It was then that De Persigny showed his teeth, and insisted upon the night of the 1st or 2nd of December as the latest. The interview was a very stormy one. On that very morning De Persigny had received a letter from London, not addressed to his residence. It contained a draft for £2000, but with the intimation that these would be the last funds forthcoming. He showed the Prince-President the letter, and Napoleon gave in there and then. The letters spoken of just now were despatched on the same day. It was with that money that the Coup d'Etat was made, and all the stories about a million and a half of francs being handed respectively to De Morny, De Maupas, Saint-Arnaud, and the rest are so much invention.

Up to six o'clock in the afternoon of the 1st of December, General de Saint-Arnaud was virtually undecided, not with regard to the necessity of the Coup d'Etat, but with regard to the opportuneness of it within the next twelve hours. I have the following story from the lips of Baron Lacrosse, who was one of the actors in it. On the eve of the Coup d'Etat he was Minister of Public Works, and as such was present at the sitting of the Assembly on the 1st of December. A member ascended the tribune to interpellate the Minister for War, and, the latter being absent, the question was deferred until next day. That same evening, 1st of December, there was an official dinner at M. Daviel's, the Minister of Justice, and at the termination of the sitting, M. Lacrosse

called in his carriage at the Ministry for War to take his colleague. "You may make up your mind for a warm half-hour to-morrow," he said with a smile, as he entered General Saint-Arnaud's room. "Why?" asked the general. "You are going to be interpellated." "I expected as much, and was just considering my answer. I am glad you warned me in time. I think I know what to say now."

I do not believe that Baron Lacrosse had the faintest inkling of the real drift of the remark, nor have I ever asked him directly whether he had. As far as I could gather afterwards from one or two people who were there, the Elysée presented no unusual feature that night. The reception was well attended, as the ordinary receptions on Mondays generally were, for the times had gone by when the courtyard was a howling wilderness dotted with two, or perhaps three, hackney cabs. It would appear that a great many well-known men and a corresponding number of pretty women moved as usual through the salons, only one of which was shut up, that at the very end of the suite, and which did duty as a council-chamber, and contained the portrait of the then young Emperor of Austria, Francis-Joseph. But this was scarcely noticed, nor did the early withdrawal of the Prince-President provoke any comment, for it happened pretty often. Very certain is it that at twelve o'clock that night the Elysée was wrapt in darkness, for I happened to pass there at that hour. Standing at the door, or rather inside it, was the captain of the guard, smoking a cigar. I believe it was Captain Desondes of the "Guides," but I will not be sure, for I was not near enough to distinguish plainly. The Faubourg

St. Honoré was pretty well deserted, save for a few individuals prowling about; they were probably detectives in the pay of the Prince-President's adversaries.

Let me return for a moment to London, and give an account of what happened there on the 2nd of December, as supplied by the writer of the above-mentioned letter, in an epistle which reached Paris only on the 7th.

It appears that on the day of the Coup d'Etat London woke up amidst a dense fog. Virtually the news of what had happened in Paris early that morning did not spread until between two and three o'clock: Our informant had been invited to a dinner-party at the French Embassy that night, and though in no way actively connected with politics, he was asking himself whether he should go or stay away, when, at five o'clock, he received a note from the Embassy, saying that the dinner would not take place. The fact was that at the eleventh hour the whole of the corps diplomatique had sent excuses. Our friend went to his club, had his dinner, and spent part of the evening there. At about eleven a crony of his came in, and seeing him seated in the smoking-room, exclaimed, "Why, I thought you were going to Walewski's dinner and reception." "So I was," remarked our friend, "but it was countermanded at five." "Countermanded? Why, I passed the Embassy just now, and it was blazing with light. Come and look."

They took a cab, and sure enough the building was positively illuminated. Our friend went in, and the salons were crammed to suffocation. Lord Palmerston was talking animatedly to Count Waleski; the

whole corps diplomatique accredited to the court of St. James was there. The fact was that about nine or half-past the most favourable news from Paris had reached London. The report soon spread that Lord Palmerston had officially adhered to the Coup d'Etat, and that he had telegraphed in that sense to the various English embassies abroad without even consulting his fellow-ministers.

I believe our friend was correctly informed, for it is well known that Palmerston did not resign, but was virtually dismissed from office. He never went to Windsor to give up the seals; Lord John Russell had to do it for him. Persigny, therefore, considered that he had fallen in the cause of Louis-Napoleon, and as such he became little short of an idol. The Prince-President himself was not far from sharing in that worship. Not once, but a hundred times, his familiars have heard him say, "Avec Palmerston on peut faire des grandes choses." Nevertheless, Palmerston appealed more to De Persigny's imagination than to Louis-Napoleon's. After all, he was perhaps much more of a Richelieu than a constitutional minister in a constitutional country has a right to be nowadays, and that was what Persigny admired above all things. His long stay in England had by no means removed his inherent dislike to parliamentary government, and, rightly or wrongly, he credited Palmerston with a similar sentiment.

De Persigny was amiable and obliging enough, provided one knew how to manage him, and with those whom he liked, but exceedingly thin-skinned and often violent with those whom he disliked. He was, moreover, very jealous with regard to Louis-

Napoleon's affection for him. I doubt whether he really minded the influence wielded by the Empress, De Morny, and Walewski over the Emperor, but he grudged them their place in the Emperor's heart. This was essentially the case with regard to the former. He would have been glad to see his old friend and Imperial master contract a loveless marriage with some insignificant German or Russian princess, who would have borne her husband few or many children, in order to secure the safety of the dynasty, but the passion that prompted the union with Eugénie de Montijo he considered virtually as an injury to himself. I give his opinion on that subject in English, because, though expressed in French, it had certainly been inspired by his sojourn in England. "When love invades a man's heart, there is scarcely any room left for friendship. You cannot drive love for a woman and friendship for a man in double harness, you are obliged to drive them tandem; and what is worse in a case like that of the Emperor, friendship becomes the leader and love the wheeler. Of course, to the outsider, friendship has the place of honour; in reality, love, the wheeler, is in closest contact with the driver and the vehicle, and can, moreover, have a sly kick at friendship, the leader. Personally, I am an exception—I may say a phenomenal exception—because my affection for the Emperor is as strong as my love for my wife."

Those who knew both the Emperor and Madame de Persigny might have fitly argued that this equal division of affection was a virtual injustice to the sovereign, who was decidedly more amiable than the spouse. The former rarely did a spiteful thing from

personal motives of revenge; I only know of two. He never invited Lady Jersey to the Tuileries during the Empire, because she had shown her dislike of him when he was in London; he exiled David d'Angers because the sculptor had refused to finish the monument of Queen Hortense after the Coup-d'Etat. David d'Angers was one of the noblest creatures that ever lived, and I mean to speak of him at greater length. On the other hand, Madame de Persigny made her husband's life, notwithstanding his love for her, a burden by her whimsical disposition, her vindictive temperament, and her cheeseparing in everything except her own lavish expenditure on dress. She was what the French call "*une femme qui fait des scènes*;" she almost prided herself upon being superior in birth to her husband, though in that respect there was really not a pin to choose between her grandfather, Michel Ney, the stable-boy, who had risen to be a duke of the First Empire, and her husband, the sergeant-quartermaster Fialin, who became Duc de Persigny under the second. She was always advocating retrenchment in the household. "True," said Persigny, "she cuts down her dresses too, but the more she cuts, the more they cost." For in his angry moments he would now and then tell a story against his wife. Here is one. Persigny, as I have already said, was hospitable to a fault, but he had always to do battle when projecting a grand entertainment. "There was so much trouble with the servants, and as for the chef, his extravagance knew no bounds." So said madame; and sick at last of always hearing the same complaints, he decided to let Chevet provide. All went well at first, because

he himself went to the Palais-Royal to give his orders, merely stating the number of guests, and leaving the rest to the famous caterers, than whom there are no more obliging or conscientious purveyors anywhere. After a little while he began to leave the arrangements to madame; she herself sent out the invitations, so there could be no mistake with regard to the number. He soon perceived, however, that the dinners, if not inferior in quality to the former ones, were decidedly inferior in quantity. At last, one evening, when there were twenty-six people round the board, there was not enough for twenty, and next day De Persigny took the road to the Palais-Royal once more to lodge his complaint personally. "Comment, monsieur le comte," was the reply of one of the principals, "vous dites qu'il y avait vingt-six convives et qu'il n'y avait pas de quoi nourrir vingt; je vous crois parfaitement; voila la commande de madame la comtesse, copiée dans notre registre: 'Dîner chez M. de Persigny pour seize personnes.'"

Madame had simply pocketed, or intended to pocket, fifteen hundred francs—for Chevet rarely charged less than a hundred and fifty francs per head, wines included—and had endeavoured to make the food for sixteen do for twenty six. Of course there was a scene. Madame promised amendment, and the husband was only too willing to believe. The amendment was worse than the original offence, for one night the whole of the supper-table, set out à la Française, *i.e.* with everything on it, gave way, because, her own dining-table having proved too small, she had declined Chevet's offer of providing one at a cost of seven or eight francs, and sent for a jobbing

carpenter to put together some boards and trestles at the cost of two francs. Chevet managed to provide another banquet within three quarters of an hour, which, with the one that had been spoiled, was put in the bill. Within a comparatively short time of her husband's death, early in the seventies, Madame de Persigny contracted a second marriage, in direct opposition to the will of her family.

Most of the men in the immediate entourage of the Emperor were intoxicated with their sudden leap into power, but of course the intoxication manifested itself in different ways. A good many considered themselves the composers of the Napoleonic Opera—for it was really such in the way it held the stage of France for eighteen years, the usual tragic finale not even being wanting. With the exception of De Persigny, they were in reality but the orchestral performers, and he, to give him his utmost due, was only the orchestrator of the score and part author of the libretto. The original themes had been composed by the exile of St. Helena, and were so powerfully attractive to, and so constantly haunting, the ears of the majority of Frenchmen as to have required no outward aid to remembrance for thirty-five years, though I do not forget either Thiers' works, Victor Hugo's poetry, Louis-Philippe's generous transfer of the great captain's remains to France, nor Louis-Napoleon's own attempts at Strasburg and Boulogne, all of which contributed to that effect. Nevertheless, all the artisans of the Coup d'Etat considered themselves nearly as great geniuses as the intellectual and military giant who conceived and executed the 19th Brumaire, and pretended to impose their policy upon Europe by

imposing their will upon the Emperor, though not one could hold a candle to him in statecraft. Napoleon with a Moltke by his side would have been a match for Bismarck, and the left bank of the Rhine *might* have been French; Alsace-Lorraine would certainly not have been German. It is not my purpose, however, to enter upon politics. I repeat, De Persigny, De Morny, and to a certain extent Walewski, endeavoured to exalt themselves into political Napoleons at all times and seasons; De Saint-Arnaud felt convinced that the strategical mantle of the great warrior had fallen upon him; De Maupas fancied himself another Fouché. The only one who was really free from pretensions of either kind was Colonel (afterwards General) Fleury. He was the only modest man among the lot.

The greatest offender in that way was, no doubt, De Persigny. During his journey to Rome in 1866 he did not hesitate to tender his political advice to such past masters in diplomacy as Pius IX. and Cardinal Antonelli. Both pretended to profit by the lesson, but Mgr. de Mérode,* who was not quite so

* Frédéric Xavier de Mérode was the descendant of an ancient Flemish family, and became an influential member of the Prelatura. He took an active share in the organization of the Papal troops which fought at Mentana. There is a romantic but absolutely true story connected with his military career. He was from his very youth intended for the priesthood; but one day, when he was but nineteen, he had a quarrel with a fellow-student, who gave him a box on the ears. M. de Mérode was too conscientious a Catholic to fight a duel, and still his pride forbade him to remain under the imputation of being a coward. So he enlisted first in a Belgian, subsequently in a foreign regiment, and proved his courage. He was very hot-tempered, and had frequent disagreements with Generals Lamoricière and De Guyon, and even with Pius IX. himself, who, on the occasion of the promulgation of the decree of infallibility, positively forbade him to enter the Vatican again. But he soon afterwards made his peace with the Pontiff. His worst enemies—and he had many—never questioned his sincerity and loyalty.—*EDITOR.*

patient, had many an animated discussion with him, in which De Persigny frequently got the worst. One evening the latter thought fit to twit him with his pugnaciousness. "I suppose, monsignor," he said, "it's the ancient leaven of the trooper getting the upper hand now and then." "True," replied the prelate; "I was a captain in the foreign legion, and fought in Africa, where I got my cross of the Legion of Honour. But you, monsieur le duc, I fancy I have heard that you were more or less of a sergeant-quartermaster in a cavalry regiment."

Mgr. de Mérode could have done De Persigny no greater injury than to remind him of his humble origin. He always winced under such allusions; his constant preoccupation was to make people forget it, and he often exposed himself to ridicule in the attempt. He knew nothing about art, and yet he would speak about it, not as if he had studied the subject, but as if he had been brought up in a refined society, where the atmosphere had been impregnated with it. As a matter of course, he became an easy victim to the picture-dealers and bric-à-brac merchants. I remember his silver being taken to the mint during the Siege. He had paid an enormous price for it on the dealer's representation that it was antique: "C'est du Louis XV. tout pur." "Tellement pur que c'est du Victoria," said a connoisseur; and he was not mistaken, for it had been manufactured by a firm of London silversmiths. But it was a compliment for all that to the Queen.

With all his faults, De Persigny was at heart a better man than De Morny, who affected to look down upon him. True, the latter had none of his glaring defects,

neither had he any of his sterling virtues. One evening, in January, 1849, when the Prince-President had been less than a month at the Elysée, a closed carriage drove into the courtyard and stopped before the flight of steps leading to the hall, which, like the rest of the building, was already wrapt in semi-darkness. A gentleman alighted who was evidently expected, for the officer on duty conducted him almost without a word to the private apartments of the President, where the latter was walking up and down, the usual cigarette between his lips, evidently greatly pre-occupied and visibly impatient. The door had scarcely opened when the Prince's face, generally so difficult to read, lighted up as if by magic. Before the officer had time to announce the visitor, the prince stepped forward, held out his hand, and with the other clasped the new-comer to his breast. The officer knew the visitor. It was the Comte Auguste de Morny. As a matter of course he retired, and saw and heard no more. I had the above account from his own lips, and he felt certain that this was the first time the brothers had ever met.

The Comte de Morny was close upon forty then, and for at least half of that time had been emancipated from all restraint; he was a well-known figure in the society of Louis-Philippe's reign; he had been a deputy for one of the constituencies in Auvergne; at the period of his first meeting with Louis-Napoleon he was at the head of an important industrial establishment down that way, and one fain asks one's self why he had waited until then to shake his brother's hand. The answer is not difficult. There is an oft-repeated story about De Morny having been at the Opéra-

Comique during the evening of the 1st of December, 1851. Rumours of the Coup d'Etat were rife, and a lady said, "Il parait qu'on va donner un fameux coup de balai. De quel côté serez vous, M. de Morny?" "Soyez sure, madame, que je serai du côté du manche." Morny always averred that he had said nothing of the kind. "They invented it afterwards, perhaps because they credited me with the instinctive faculty of being on the winning side, the side of the handle, in any and every emergency."

I think one may safely accept that version, and that is why he refrained from claiming his brother's friendship and acquaintance until he felt almost certain that the latter was fingering the handle of the broom that was to make a clean sweep of the Second Republic. It is difficult to determine how much or how little he contributed to the success of that sweep, but I have an idea that it was very little. One thing is very certain, for I have it on very good—I may say, the best—authority. He did not contribute any money to the undertaking; he endeavoured to raise funds from others, but he himself did not loosen his purse-strings; when, curiously enough, he was the only one among the immediate entourage of Louis-Napoleon whose purse-strings were worth loosening.

Allowing for the difference of sex, better breeding and better education, De Morny often reminded one of Rachel. They possessed the same powers of fascination, and were, I am afraid, equally selfish at heart. To read the biographies of both—I do not mean those that pretend to be historical—one would think that there had never been a grande dame on the stage of the Comédie-Française before Rachel or contemporary

with her, though Augustine Brohan was decidedly more grande dame than Rachel in every respect. It is the same with regard to De Morny. To the chroniqueur during the Second Empire he was the only grand seigneur—the rest were only seigneurs; but I am inclined to think that the chroniqueur of those days had seen very few real grand seigneurs. To use a popular locution, "they did not go thirteen to the dozen" at the court of Napoleon III.; and among the people with whom De Morny came habitually in contact, in the course of his financial and industrial schemes, a grand seigneur was even a greater rarity than at the Tuileries. If a kind of quiet impertinence to some of one's fellow-creatures, and a tacitly expressed contempt for nearly the whole of the rest, constitute the grand seigneur, then certainly De Morny could have claimed the title. I have elsewhere noted the meeting of Taglioni with her husband at De Morny's dinner-party. If it had been arranged by the host with the view of affecting a reconciliation between the couple, then nothing could have been more praiseworthy; but I am not at all sure of it. If it were not, then it became an unpardonable joke at the woman's expense, and in the worst taste; but the chroniqueur of those days would have applauded it all the same.

Here are two stories which, at different times, were told by De Morny's familiars and sycophants in order to stamp him the grand seigneur. Late in the fifties he was an assiduous frequenter of the salons of a banker, whose sisters-in-law happened to be very handsome. One evening, while talking to one of them, they came to ask him to take a hand at lansquenet. He had

evidently no intention of leaving the society of the lady for that of the gaming-table, and said so. Of course, his host was in the wrong in pressing the thing, nevertheless one has yet to learn that "two wrongs make one right."

"What will you play?" they asked, when they had as good as badgered him away from his companion.

"The simple rouge and the noir. That's the quickest."

"How much for?"

"Ten thousand francs."

The stake seemed somewhat high, and no one cared to take it up. But the host himself felt bound to set the example, and the sum was made up. De Morny lost, and was about to rise from the table, when they said—

"Have your revenge."

"Very well; ten thousand on the black."

He lost again. Most grand seigneurs would have got up without saying anything. Twenty thousand francs was, after all, not an important sum to him, and I feel, moreover, certain that it was not the loss of the money that vexed him. But he felt bound to emphasize his indifference.

"There, that will do. I trust I shall be left in peace now."

My informant considered this exceedingly *talon rouge*; I did not.

A story of a similar kind, when he was a simple deputy. A bigwig, with an inordinate ambition to become a minister, invited him to dinner. He had been told that his host was in the habit of drinking a rare Bordeaux which was only offered to one or two

guests, quietly pointed out by the former to the servant. At the question of the latter whether he (M. de Morny) would take Brane-Mouton or Ermitage, he pointed to the famous bottle that had been hidden away. The servant, as badly trained as the master, looked embarrassed, but at last filled De Morny's glass with the precious nectar. De Morny simply poured it into a tumbler and diluted it with water.

Ridiculous as it may seem, De Morny often spoke and acted as if he had royal blood in his veins, and in that respect scarcely considered himself inferior to Colonna Walewski, of whose origin there could be no doubt. A glance at the man's face was sufficient. Both frequently spoke and acted as if Louis-Napoleon occupied the Imperial throne by their good will, and that, therefore, he was, in a measure, bound to dance to their fiddling. Outwardly these two were fast friends, up to a certain period; I fancy that their common hatred of De Persigny was the strongest link of that bond. In reality they were as jealous of one another and of their influence over the Emperor as they were of De Persigny and his. The latter, who was well aware of all this, frankly averred that he preferred Walewski's undisguised and outspoken hostility to De Morny's very questionable cordiality. "The one would take my head like Judith took Holofernes', the other would shave it like Delilah shaved Samson's, provided I trusted myself to either, which I am not likely to do."

It was De Persigny who told me the substance of the following story, and I believe every word of it, because, first, I never caught De Persigny telling a

deliberate falsehood; secondly, because I heard it confirmed many years afterwards in substance by two persons who were more or less directly concerned in it.

In the latter end of 1863 one of the sons of Baron James de Rothschild died; I believe it was the youngest of the four, but I am not certain. The old baron, who was generosity itself when it came to endowing charitable institutions, was absolutely opposed to any waste of money. Amidst the terrible grief at his loss, he was still the careful administrator, and sent to M. Emile Perrin, the then director of the Grand Opéra, and subsequently the director of the Comédie-Française, asking him to dispose of his box on the grand tier, under the express condition that it should revert to him after a twelve-month. It was the very thing M. Perrin was not empowered to do. Though nominally the director, he was virtually the manager under Comte Bacciochi, the superintendent of the Imperial theatres; that is, the theatres which received a subsidy from the Emperor's civil list. The subscriber who wished to relinquish his box or seat, for however short a time—of course without continuing to pay for it—forfeited all subsequent claim to it. In this instance, though, apart from the position of Baron James, the cause which prompted the application warranted an exception being made; still M. Perrin did not wish to act upon his own responsibility, and referred the matter to Comte Bacciochi, telling him at the same time that Comte Walewski would be glad to take the box during the interim. The latter had but recently resigned the Ministry of State by reason of an un-

expected difficulty in the "Roman Question;"* the ministerial box went, as a matter of course, with the appointment, and Comte Walewski regretted the loss of the former, which was one of the best in the house, more than the loss of the latter, and had asked his protégé—M. Perrin owed his position at the Opéra to him—to get him as good a one as soon as possible.

It so happened that Comte Bacciochi had a grudge against Walewski for having questioned certain of his prerogatives connected with the superintendence of the Opéra. The moment he heard of Walewski's wish, he replied, "M. de Morny applied to me several months since for a better box, and I see no reason why Comte Walewski should have it over his head."

Vindictive like a Corsican, he laid the matter directly before the Emperor, and furthermore did his best to exasperate the two postulants against one another. De Morny had the box; Bacciochi had, however, succeeded so well that the two men were for a considerable time not on speaking terms.

Meanwhile the Mexican question had assumed a very serious aspect. In spite of his undoubted interest in the Jecker scheme, or probably because it had yielded all it was likely to yield, De Morny had of late been on the side of Walewski, who strongly counselled the withdrawal of the French troops. But the moment the incident of the opera-box cropped up, there was a change of front on his part. He became an ardent partisan for continuing the campaign, systematically siding against Walewski in everything, and

* If Comte Walewski ruled Napoleon III., the second Comtesse Walewska, who was an Italian by birth and very handsome, absolutely ruled her husband. The first Comtesse Walewska was Lord Sandwich's daughter.—EDITOR.

tacitly avoiding any attempt of the latter to draw him into conversation. Walewski felt hurt, and gave up the attempt in despair. A little before this, Don Gutierrez de Estada had landed in Europe with a deputation of notable Mexicans to offer the crown to Maximilian. The latter made his acceptance conditional on the despatch of twenty thousand French troops and the promise of a grant of three hundred millions of francs.

In a council held at the Tuileries these conditions were unhesitatingly declined. "That was, if I am not mistaken, on a Saturday," said De Persigny; "and it was taken for granted that everything was settled. On Monday morning the council was hurriedly summoned to the Tuileries, and having to come from a good distance, Walewski arrived when it had been sitting for more than an hour. What had happened meanwhile? Simply this. Don Gutierrez had been informed of the decision of the Emperor's advisers, and Maximilian had been communicated with by telegraph to the same effect. On the Sunday morning the Archduke telegraphed to the Mexican envoy that unless his conditions were subscribed to *in toto* he should decline the honour. Don Gutierrez, determined not to return without a king, rushed there and then to De Morny's and offered him the crown. The latter immediately accepted, in the event of Maximilian persisting in his refusal. The Emperor was simply frantic with rage, but nothing would move De Morny. The only one who really had any influence over him was 'the other prince of the blood,' meaning Walewski, for, according to him, the real and legitimate Bonapartes counted for nothing. Walewski was telegraphed

for, as I told you, early in the morning. When he came he found the council engaged in discussing the means of raising a loan. The Empress begged him to dissuade De Morny from his purpose, telling him all I have told you. Walewski refused to be the first to speak to De Morny. I think that both Walewski and De Morny have heaped injury and insult upon me more than upon any man; I would have obeyed the Empress for the Emperor's sake, but 'the two princes of the blood' only consulted their own dignity. I need not tell you what effect the elevation of De Morny to the throne of Mexico would have produced in Europe, let alone in France. Rather than risk such a thing, the money was found; Bazaine was sent, and that poor fellow, Maximilian, went to his death, because M. Bacciochi had sown dissension between the brother and the cousin of the Emperor about an opera-box. Such is history, my friend."

I repeat, De Persigny was a better man at heart than De Morny, or perhaps than Walewski, though the latter had only fads, and never stooped to the questionable practices of his fellow "prince of the blood" in the race for wealth. The erstwhile sergeant-quarter-master refrained from doing so out of sheer contempt for money-hunters, and from an inborn feeling of honesty. The son of Napoleon I., though illegitimate, felt what was due to the author of his being, and absolutely refused to be mixed up with any commercial transactions. He was never quietly insolent to any one, like the natural son of Hortense; he rarely said either a foolish or a wise thing, but frequently did ill-considered ones, as, for instance, when he wrote a play. "What induced you to do this, monsieur le comte?"

said Thiers, on the first night. "It is so difficult to write a play in five acts, and it is so easy not to write a play in five acts." Among his fads was the objection to ladies in the stalls of a theatre. In 1861 he issued an order forbidding their admission to that part of the house, and could only be persuaded with difficulty, and at the eleventh hour, to rescind it. In many respects he was like Philip II. of Spain; he worried about trifles. One day he prevailed upon M. de Boitelle, the Prefect of police, a thoroughly sensible man, to put a stop to the flying of kites, because their tails might get entangled in the telegraph wires, and cause damage to the latter. I happened to meet him on the Boulevards on the very day the edict was promulgated. He felt evidently very proud of the conception, and asked me what I thought of it. I told him the story of "the cow on the rails," according to Stephenson. Napoleon, when he heard of Walewski's reform, sent for Boitelle. "Here is an 'order in council' I want you to publish," he said, as seriously as possible. It was to the effect that "all birds found perching on the wires would be fined, and, in default of payment, imprisoned." Curiously enough, though a man of parts, and naturally intelligent, satire of that kind was lost upon him, for not very long after he prevailed upon M. de Boitelle to revive an obsolete order with regard to the length of the hackney-drivers' whips and the cracking thereof. It was M. Carlier, the predecessor of M. de Maupas, who had originally attempted a similar thing. He was rewarded with a pictorial skit representing him on the point of drowning, while cabby was trying to save him by holding out his whip, which proved too short for the purpose.

Walewski had none of the vivacity of most of the Bonapartes. I knew him a good many years before, and after the establishment of the Second Empire, and have rarely seen him out of temper. I fancy he must have made an admirable ambassador with a good chief at his back; he, himself, I think, had little spirit of initiative, though, like a good many of us, he was fully convinced of the contrary. He was, to use the correct word, frequently dull; nevertheless, it was currently asserted and believed that he was the only man Rachel ever sincerely cared for. "*Je comprends cela*," said George Sand one day, when the matter was discussed in her presence; "*son commerce doit lui reposer l'esprit*."

It is worthy of remark that during the reign which succeeded that of Louis-Philippe, the man who wielded the greatest power next to the Emperor was, in almost every respect but one, the mental and moral counterpart of "the citizen king." I am alluding to M. Eugène Rouher, sometimes called the vice-emperor.* I knew Eugène Rouher some years before he was thought of as a deputy, let alone as a minister—when, in fact, he was terminating his law courses in the Quartier-Latin; but not even the most inveterate Pumblechook would have dared to advance afterwards that he perceived the germs of his future eminence in him then. He was a good-looking young fellow, in no way distinguished from the rest. He was a not unworthy ornament of "*La Chaumière*," and did probably as much or as little poring over books as his

* It is equally curious to note, perhaps, that M. Grévy, who occupied the presidential chair of the Third Republic for a longer period than his two predecessors, was in many respects like Louis-Philippe, notably in his love of money.—*EDITOR.*

companions. Still, there could be no doubt as to his natural intelligence, but the dunces in my immediate circle were very few. He was not very well off; but, as I have said elsewhere, the Croesuses were also rare. At any rate, Eugène Rouher had entirely passed out of my recollection, and when, eleven or twelve years later, I saw his name in the list of Odilon Barrot's administration as Minister of Justice, I had not the remotest idea that it was the Eugène Rouher of my Quartier-Latin days. I am certain that a great many of our former acquaintances were equally ignorant, because, though I met several of them from time to time on the "fashionable side" of the Seine, I do not remember a single one having drawn my attention to him. It was only at one of the presidential receptions at the Elysée, in 1850, that I became aware of the fact. He came up to me and held out his hand. "Il me semble, monsieur, que nous nous sommes déjà rencontrés au Quartier-Latin," he said. Even then I was in the dark with regard to the position he was fast assuming; but the Prince-President himself enlightened me to a great extent in the course of the evening. "It appears that you and Rouher are old acquaintances," he said in English; and on my nodding in the affirmative, he added, "If you were a Frenchman, and inclined to go in for politics, or even an Englishman in need of patronage or influence, I would advise you to stick to him, for he is a very remarkable man, and I fancy we shall hear a good deal of him within the next few years." I may, therefore, say without exaggeration that I was one of the first who had a trustworthy tip with regard to a comparatively "dark political horse," and from a tipster in whom by that time I was inclined to believe.

Though I was neither "a Frenchman inclined to go in for politics," nor "even an Englishman in need of patronage or influence," my curiosity had been aroused; for, I repeat, at the time of our first acquaintance I had considered Eugène Rouher a fairly intelligent young fellow; but his intelligence had not struck me as likely to make a mark, at any rate so soon, seeing that he was considerably below forty when I met him at the Elysée. It is idle to assert, as the republicans have done since, that he gained his position by abandoning the political professions to which he owed his start in public life. Among the nine hundred deputies of the Second Republic, there were at least a hundred intelligent so-called republicans ready and willing to do the same with the prospect of a far less signal reward than fell eventually to Rouher's lot.

My curiosity was doomed to remain unsatisfied until two or three years later, when Rouher had already become a fixture in the political organization of the Empire. It was De Morny himself who gave me the particulars of Rouher's beginnings, and I have no reason to suppose that he painted them and the man in deliberately glowing colours, albeit that in one important crisis they acted in concert. Clermont-Ferrand was only about twelve miles from Riom, Rouher's native town. I have already remarked that De Morny, at the time he met with his brother for the first time, was at the head of an important industrial establishment. It was at the former place; De Morny, therefore, was in a position to know.

Eugène Rouher, it appears, like a good many men who have risen to political eminence, belonged to what, for want of a better term, I may call the rural bour-

geoisie—that is, the frugal, thrifty, hard-headed, small landowner, tilling his own land, honest in the main, ever on the alert to increase his own property by a timely bargain, with an intense love of the soil, with a kind of semi-Voltairean contempt for the clergy, an ingrained respect largely admixed with fear for “the man of the law,” to which profession he often brings up his son in order to have what he likes most—litigation—for nothing. Rouher’s grandfather was a man of that stamp; he made an attorney of his son, and the latter established himself in the Rue Desaix, in a small, one-storied, uninviting-looking tenement, where, in the year 1814, Eugène Rouher was born.* Rouher’s father was not very prosperous, yet he managed to send both his sons to Paris to study law. The elder son, much older than the future minister, had succeeded in getting a very good practice at the Riom bar, but he died a short time before Eugène returned from Paris, leaving a widow and a son, who, of course, was too young to take his father’s place. The young

* Before that it bore the name of the Rue des Trois-Hautbois, and in the heyday of the Second Empire it was changed into the Rue Eugène-Rouher. But at the fall of Sedan the indignation against the Emperor’s powerful minister was so great that his carriages had to be removed from Riom lest they should be burned by the mob, and the street resumed its old appellation. In November, 1887, three years after Rouher’s death, I happened to be at Clermont-Ferrand, waiting for General Boulanger to go to Paris. I went over to Riom and had a look at the house. It was occupied by a carpenter or joiner, to whose father it had been sold years previously by the express wish of one of Eugène Rouher’s daughters. I got into conversation with an intelligent inhabitant of the town, who told me that on the 4th of September, 1870, the feeling against Rouher was much stronger than against Louis-Napoleon himself, yet that feeling was an implied compliment to Rouher. “He was the cleverer of the two,” the people shouted; “he ought not to have allowed the Emperor to engage in this war. He could have prevented it with one word.” Nevertheless, in a little while it abated, and Rouher was elected a member of the National Assembly.—EDITOR.

barrister, therefore, stepped into a capital ready-made practice, and being exceedingly amiable, bright, hard-working, and essentially honest, soon made a host of friends.

"I have frequently found myself opposed to Rouher," said De Morny; "but his unswerving loyalty to the Empire and the Emperor is beyond question. I should not wonder but what he died poor.*

"As you know, Eugène Rouher was really very handsome. Mdlle. Conchon—that is Madame Rouher's maiden name—thought him the handsomest man in the world. True, her world did not extend beyond a few miles from Clermont-Ferrand; but I fancy she might have gone further and fared worse. You know old Conchon, and the pride he takes in his son-in-law. Well, he would not hear of the marriage at first. Conchon was a character in those days. Though he had but a poor practice at the Clermont bar, he was clever; and if he had gone to Paris as a journalist, instead of vegetating down there, I am sure he would have made his way. He was very fond of his classics—of Horace and Tibullus above all—and turned out some pretty Anacreontic verses for the local 'caveau;' for Clermont, like every other provincial centre, prided itself on its 'caveau.' †

* De Morny's prophecy turned out correct. M. Eugène Rouher died a poor man. There is a comic story connected with this poverty. At the beginning of the Republic, and during the presidency of Thiers, Rouher's house was constantly watched by detectives. The weather was abominably bad; it rained constantly. Madame Rouher sent them some cotton umbrellas, excusing herself for not sending silk ones, because she could not afford it.—EDITOR.

† The diminutive of "cave" (cellar). Really a gathering of poets and song-writers, which reached its highest reputation in Paris during the early part of the present century. The Saturday nights at the Savage Club are perhaps the nearest approach to it in London.—EDITOR.

"A time came, however, when Conchon's fortunes took a turn for the better. You can form no idea of the political ignorance that prevailed in the provinces even as late as the reign of Louis-Philippe. Any measure advocated or promulgated by the Government was sure to be received with suspicion by the populations as affecting their liberties, and, what was of still greater consequence to them, their property. The First Republic had given them licence to despoil others; any subsequent measure of the monarchies was looked upon by them as an attempt at reprisal. In 1842 a general census was ordered. You may remember the hostility it provoked in Paris; it was nothing to its effect in the agricultural and wine-growing centres. The Republican wire-pullers spread the report that the census meant nothing but the thin end of the wedge of a bill for the duties upon wine to be paid by the grower. There was a terrible row in Clermont-Ferrand and the neighbourhood; the 'Marseillaise' had to make way for the still more revolutionary 'Ça-ira.' Conchon was maire of Clermont-Ferrand, and he who was as innocent of all this as a new-born babe, had his house burned over his head. The Government argued that if the mob had burned the maire's dwelling in preference to that of the prefect, it was because the former was a more influential personage than the latter; for there could be no other reason for their giving him the 'Legion of Honour,' and appointing him to a puisne judgeship on the bench of Riom, seeing that he had neither made an heroic defence of his property, nor endeavoured to carry out the provisions of the census bill by armed force. In fact, the latter step would have been an impossibility on Conchon's

part. You and I know well enough how difficult it is to make Frenchmen hold their tongues by means of troops; to endeavour to make them speak—in distinction to yelling—by similar means is altogether out of the question. You cannot take every head of a family, even in a comparatively small town like Clermont-Ferrand, and put him between two gendarmes to make him tell you his name, his age, and those of his family. I fancy, moreover, that Conchon was not at Clermont at all when the mob made a bonfire of his dwelling; it was on a Sunday, and he had probably gone into the country. At any rate, as I told you, they gave him the cross and a judgeship. It never rains but it pours. Contrary to the ordinary principles of French mobs of hating a man in proportion to his standing well with the Government, they started a subscription to indemnify Conchon for the loss of his house, which subscription amounted to a hundred thousand francs.

“Conchon had become a somebody, and refused to give his daughter to a mere provincial barrister now that he belonged to ‘la magistrature assise.’* The young people were, however, very fond of one another, and had their way. They were a very handsome couple, and became the life and soul of the best society of Clermont-Ferrand, which, exclusive as it was, admitted them as they had admitted the widow of the elder brother. The younger Madame Rouher was by no means as sprightly or as clever as she has become

* The term for the French bench, consisting of judges; the *parquet*, i.e. those to whom the public prosecution is confided, are called “la magistrature debout.” As a rule, the latter have a great deal more talent than the former. “What are you going to do with your son?” asked a gentleman of his friend. “I am going to make a magistrate of him—‘debout,’ if he is strong enough to keep on his legs; ‘assis,’ if he be not.”—EDITOR.

since. She was somewhat of a spoilt child, but her husband was a very brilliant talker indeed, though, unlike many brilliant talkers, there was not an ounce of spite in his cleverest remarks. The electors might have done worse than send him to Paris the first time he invited their suffrages in '46, under the auspices of Guizot. Nevertheless, he was beaten by a goodly majority, and he had to wait until after the Revolution of February, when he was returned on the Republican list."

So far De Morny. Consulting my personal recollections of Eugène Rouher, whom I still see now and then, I find nothing but good to say of him. I am not prepared to judge him as a politician, that kind of judgment being utterly at variance with the spirit of these notes, but I know of no French statesman whose memory will be entitled to greater respect than Rouher's, with the exception, perhaps, of Guizot's. Both men committed grave faults, but no feeling of self-interest actuated them. The world is apt to blame great ministers for clinging to power after they have apparently given the greatest measure of their genius. They do not blame Harvey and Jenner for having continued to study and to practise after they had satisfactorily demonstrated, the one the theory of the circulation of the blood, the other the possibility of inoculation against small-pox; they do not blame Milton for having continued to write after he had given "Paradise Lost," Rubens for having continued to paint after he had given "The Descent from the Cross," Michael-Angelo for not having abandoned the sculptor's chisel after he had finished the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. The bold stroke of policy that

made England a principal shareholder in the Suez Canal, the Menai Bridge, the building of the Great Western Railway, were achievements of great men who had apparently given all there was in them to give; why should Rouher have retired when he was barely fifty, and not have endeavoured to retrieve the mistake he evidently made when he allowed Bismarck to humiliate Austria at Sadowa, and to lay the foundations of a unified Germany? Richelieu made mistakes also, but he retrieved them before his death.

Be this as it may, Rouher was both in public and private life an essentially honourable and honest man—as honest as Louis-Philippe in many respects, far more honest in others, and absolutely free from the everlasting preoccupation about money which marred that monarch's character. He was as disinterested as Guizot, and would have scorned the tergiversations and hypocrisy of Thiers. He never betrayed his master's cause; he never consciously sacrificed his country to his pride. The only blame that can be laid to his charge is that he allowed his better sense to be overruled by a woman; but that woman was the wife of his sovereign.

He was, above all, a staunch friend to those who had known him in his early days. "There will be no Auvergnats left in Clermont-Ferrand and Riom if this goes on," said a witty journalist, seeing Rouher constantly surrounded by the natives of that particular province, to the exclusion of every one else. "We'll send an equal quantity of Parisians to Auvergne; it will do them good, and teach them to work," replied Rouher, when he heard of the remark. "And in another generation or two Paris will see what it has

never seen before, namely, frugal Parisians, doing a day's labour for a day's wage, for we'll have their offspring back by then." For Rouher could be very witty when he liked, and never feared to hit out straight. He was a delightful talker, and, next to Alexandre Dumas, the best raconteur I have ever met. It was because he had a marvellous memory and a distinct talent for mimicry. Owing to this latter gift, he was unlike any other parliamentary orator I have ever heard. He would sit perfectly still under the most terrible onslaught of his opponents, whoever they were. No sign of impatience or weariness, not an attempt to take a note; his eyes remained steadily fixed on his interlocutor, his arms folded across his chest. Then he would rise slowly from his seat and walk to the tribune, when there was one, take up the argument of his adversary, not only word for word, but with the latter's intonation and gestures, almost with the latter's voice—which used to drive Thiers wild—and answer it point by point.

He used to call that "fair debating;" in reality, it was the masterly trick of a great actor, who mercilessly wielded his power of ridicule; but we must remember that he had originally been a lawyer, and that the scent of the French law-courts hung over him till the very end. "I am not always convinced of the honesty of my cause, but I hold a brief for the Government, and I feel convinced that it would not be honest to let the other party get the victory," he said.

He was, and remained, very simple in his habits. He would not have minded entertaining his familiars every night of the week, but he did not care for the grand receptions he was compelled to give. He was

very fond of the game of piquet. His father-in-law, who had been promoted to a judgeship in one of the Paris courts, had been a foeman worthy of his steel ; "but I am afraid," laughed Rouher, "that his exaggerated admiration for me affects his play."

Rouher was right ; M. Conchon was inordinately proud of his son-in-law. He lived, as it were, in the Minister of State's reflected glory. His great delight was to go shopping, in order to have the satisfaction of saying to the tradesmen, "You'll have this sent to my son-in-law, M. Rouher." The stir and bustle of the Paris streets confused him to the last, but he did not mind it, seeing that it afforded him an opportunity of inquiring his way. "I want to get back to the Ministry of State—to my son-in-law, M. Rouher." It was not snobbishness ; it was sheer unadulterated admiration of the man to whom he had somewhat reluctantly given his daughter.

CHAPTER IV.

Society during the Second Empire—The Court at Compiègne—The English element—Their opinion of Louis-Napoleon—The difference between the court of Louis-Philippe and that of Napoleon III.—The luggage of M. Villemain—The hunts in Louis-Philippe's time—Louis-Napoleon's advent—Would have made a better poet than an Emperor—Looks for a La Vallière or Montespan, and finds Mdlle. Eugénie de Montijo—The latter determined not to be a La Vallière or even a Pompadour—Has her great destiny foretold in her youth—Makes up her mind that it shall be realized by a right-handed and not a left-handed marriage—Queen Victoria stands her sponsor among the sovereigns of Europe—Mlle. de Montijo's mother—The Comtesse de Montijo and Halévy's "Madame Cardinal"—The first invitations to Compiègne—Mlle. de Montijo's backers for the Imperial stakes—No other entries—Louis-Napoleon utters the word "marriage"—What led up to it—The Emperor officially announces his betrothal—The effect it produced—The Faubourg St.-Germain—Dupin the elder gives his views—The engaged couple feel very uncomfortable—Negotiations to organize the Empress's future household—Rebuffs—Louis-Napoleon's retorts—Mlle. de Montijo's attempt at wit and sprightliness—Her iron will—Her beauty—Her marriage—She takes Marie-Antoinette for her model—She fondly imagines that she was born to rule—She presumes to teach Princess Clotilde the etiquette of courts—The story of two detectives—The hunts at Compiègne—Some of the *mise en scène* and *dramatis personæ*—The shooting-parties—Mrs. Grundy not banished, but specially invited and drugged—The programme of the gatherings—Compiègne in the season—A story of an Englishman accommodated for the night in one of the Imperial luggage-vans.

I WAS a frequent visitor to Compiègne throughout the Second Empire. I doubt whether, besides Lord H—— and myself, there was a single English guest there who went for the mere pleasure of going. Lords Palmerston, Cowley, and Clarendon, and a good many others whom I could name, had either political or

private ends to serve. They all looked upon Napoleon III. as an adventurer, but an adventurer whom they might use for their own purpose. I am afraid that the same charge might be preferred against persons in even a more exalted station. Prince Albert averred that Napoleon III. had sold his soul to the devil; Lord Cowley, on being asked by a lady whether the Emperor talked much, replied, "No, but he always lies." Another diplomatist opined "that Napoleon lied so well, that one could not even believe the contrary of what he said."

Enough. I went to the Compiègne of Napoleon III., just as I had gone to the Compiègne of the latter years of Louis-Philippe—simply to enjoy myself; with this difference, however,—that I enjoyed myself much better at the former than at the latter. Louis-Philippe's hospitality was very genuine, homely, and unpretending, but it lacked excitement—especially for a young man of my age. The entertainments were more in harmony with the tastes of the Guizots, Cousins, and Vilemains, who went down *en redingote*, and took little else; especially the eminent professor and minister of public education, whose luggage consisted of a brown paper parcel, containing a razor, a clean collar, and the cordon of the Legion of Honour. There were some excellent hunts, organized by the Grand Veneur, the Comte de Girardin, and the Chief Ranger, the Baron de Larminat; but the evenings, notwithstanding the new theatre built by Louis-Philippe, were frightfully dull, and barely compensated for by the reviews at the camp of Compiègne, to which the King conducted his Queen and the princesses in a *tapissière* and four, he himself driving, the Duc

and Duchesse de Montpensier occupying the box seat, the rest of the family ensconced in the carriage, "absolument en bons bourgeois." With the advent of Louis-Napoleon, even before he assumed the imperial purple, a spirit of change came over the place. Hortense's second son would probably have made a better poet than an emperor. His whole life has been a miscarried poem, miscarried by the inexorable demands of European politics. He dreamt of being L'Empereur-Soleil, as Louis XIV. had been Le Roi-Soleil. Visions of a nineteenth-century La Vallière or Montespan, hanging fondly on his arm, and dispelling the harassing cares of State by sweet smiles while treading the cool umbrageous glades of the magnificent park, haunted his brain. He would have gone as far as Louis le Bien-Aimé, and built another nest for another Pompadour. He did not mean to make a Maintenon out of a Veuve Scarron, and, least of all, an empress out of a Mademoiselle Eugénie de Montijo. Mdlle. de Montijo, on the other hand, was determined not to be a Mdme. de Maintenon, let alone a La Vallière or a Pompadour. At any rate, so she said, and the man most interested in putting her assertion to the test was too infatuated to do so. "Quand on ne s'attend à rien, la moindre des choses surprend." The proverb holds good, more especially where a woman's resistance is concerned. Mdlle. de Montijo was a Spaniard, or at least half a one, and that half contained as much superstition as would have fitted out a score of her countrywomen of unmixed blood. One day in Granada, while she was sitting at her window, a gipsy, whose hand "she had crossed with

silver," is said to have foretold her that she should be queen. The young girl probably attached but little importance to the words at that time; "but," said my informant, "from the moment Louis-Napoleon breathed the first protestations of love to her, the prophecy recurred to her in all its vividness, and she made up her mind that the right hand and not the left of Louis-Napoleon should set the seal upon its fulfilment." My informant was an Englishman, very highly placed, and distinctly *au courant* of the private history of the Marquise de Montijo y Teba, as well as that of her mother. Without the least fear of being contradicted, I may say that the subsequent visit of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert was due to his direct influence. I will not go as far as to assert that Louis-Napoleon's participation in the Crimean war could not have been had at that moment at any other price, or that England could not have dispensed with that co-operation, but he, my informant, considered then that the alliance would be more closely cemented by that visit. Nor am I called upon to anticipate the final verdict of the social historian with regard to "that act of courtesy" on the part of the Queen of England, not the least justified boast of whose reign it is that she purified the morals of her court by her own example. Still, one may safely assume, in this instance, that the virtue of Mdlle. de Montijo would have been proof against the "blandishments of the future Emperor," even if she had not had the advice and countenance of her mother, whose Scotch blood would not have stood trifling with her daughter's affections and reputation. But to make the fortress of that heart doubly im-

pregnable, the Comtesse de Montijo scarcely ever left her second daughter's side. It was a great sacrifice on her part, because Mdle. Eugénie de Montijo was not her favourite child; that position was occupied by her elder, the Duchesse d'Albe. "Mais, on est mère, ou on ne l'est pas?" says Madame Cardinal.*

Mdle. de Montijo, then, became the guiding spirit of the fêtes at the Elysée. She and her mother had travelled a great deal, so had Louis-Napoleon; the latter not enough, apparently, to have learnt the wisdom of the French proverb, "Gare à la femme dont le berceau a été une malle, et le pensionnat une table d'hôte."

I have spoken elsewhere of the Coup d'Etat and of the company at the Elysée, immediately previous to it and afterwards; early in 1852—

"The little done *did* vanish to the mind,
Which forward *saw* how much remained to do."

The Prince-President undertook a journey to the southern parts of France, which he was pleased to call "an interrogation to the country." It was that to a certain extent, only the country had been crammed with one reply to it, "Vive l'empereur." Calmly reviewing things from a distance of a quarter of a century, it was the best reply the nation could have made. "Society has been too long like a pyramid turned upside down. I replaced it on its base," said Louis-Napoleon, on the 29th of March, 1852, when he opened the first session of the Chambers, and inaugurated the new constitution which was his own work.

* The author alludes to the Madame Cardinal of Ludovic Halévy, who sequesters her daughter because the baron, her would-be protector, is hanging back with the settlements.—EDITOR.



"He is right," remarked one of his female critics, "and now we are going to dance on the top of it. *À quand les invitations ?*"

The invitations were issued almost immediately after the journey just mentioned, and before the plébiscite had given the Prince-President the Imperial crown. One of the first was for a series of fêtes at Compiègne. The château was got ready in hot haste; but, of course, the "hunts" were not half so splendid as they became afterwards.

The most observed of all the guests was Mdlle. de Montijo, accompanied by her mother, but no one suspected for a single moment that the handsome Spanish girl who was galloping by Louis-Napoleon's side would be in a few months Empress of the French. Only a few knowing ones offered to back her for the Imperial Stakes at any odds; I took them, and, of course, lost heavily. This is not a figure of speech, but a literal fact. There were, however, no quotations "for a place," backers and bookies alike being agreed that she would be first or nowhere in the race.

How it would have fared with the favourite had there been any other entries, it would be difficult to say, but there were none; the various European sovereigns declined the honour of an alliance with the house of Bonaparte, so Mdlle. Eugénie de Montijo simply walked over the course. One evening, the rumour spread that Louis-Napoleon had uttered the magic word "marriage," in consequence of a violent fit of coughing which had choked the word "mistress" down his throat. Not to mince matters, the affair happened in this way, and I speak on excellent authority. The day before, there had

been a hunt, and between the return from the forest and the dinner-hour, Napoleon had presented himself unannounced in Mdle. de Montijo's apartment. Neither I nor the others who were at the château at the time could satisfactorily account for the prologue to this visit, but that there was such a prologue, and that it was conceived and enacted by at least two out of the three actors in the best spirit of the "comédie d'intrigue," so dear to the heart of Scribe, admits of no doubt; because, though the first dinner-bell had already rung, Mdle. de Montijo was still in her riding-habit, consequently on the alert. Nay, even her dainty hunting-crop was within her reach, as the intruder found to his cost; and reports were rife to the effect that, if the one had failed, the mother, who was in the next room, would have come to the rescue of her injured daughter.

The Comtesse de Montijo was spared this act of heroism; Lucrece herself sufficed for the task of defending her own honour: nevertheless, the mother's part was not at an end, even when the decisive word had been pronounced. According to her daughter, she objected to the union, from a sincere regard for her would-be son-in-law, from an all-absorbing love for her own darling. The social gulf between the two was too wide ever to be bridged, etc. "And though it will break my heart to have to obey her, I have no alternative," added Mdle. de Montijo, if not in these selfsame words, at least in words to that effect. "There remains but one hope. Write to her."

And Louis-Napoléon did write. The letter has been religiously preserved by the Montijo family. In less than three months afterwards France was officially or

semi-officially apprised of the Emperor's intended union; but, of course, the news had spread long before then, and a very varied effect it produced. Candidly speaking, it satisfied no one, and every one delivered judgment in two separate, if not different, capacities—as private citizens and as patriotic Frenchmen. The lower classes, containing the ultra-democratic element, would have perhaps applauded the bold departure from the old traditions that had hitherto presided at sovereign unions, if the bride had been French, instead of being a foreigner. They were sensible enough not to expect their new Emperor to choose from the bourgeoisie; but, in spite of their prejudices against the old noblesse, they would, in default of a princess of royal blood, have liked to see one of that noblesse's daughters share the Imperial throne. They were not deceived by Napoleon's specious argument that France had better assume openly the position of a parvenu rather than make the new principle of the unrestricted suffrage of a great nation pass for an old one by trying to introduce herself at any cost into a family of kings.

The bourgeoisie itself was more disgusted still. Incredible as it may seem, they did resent Napoleon's slight of their daughters. "*A défaut d'une princesse de sang royal, une de nos filles eut fait aussi bien qu'une étrangère, dont le grand père, après tout, était négociant comme nous. Le premier empire a été fait avec le sang de garçons d'écurie, de tonnellers; le second empire aurait pu prendre un peu de ce sang sans se mésallier.*" The bourgeois Voltairien was more biting in his sarcasm. In his speech to the grand officers of State and corporations, Napoleon had alluded to Empress Josephine: "France has not forgotten

that for the last seventy years foreign princesses have only ascended the steps of the throne to see their race scattered and proscribed, either by war or revolution. One woman alone appears to have brought the people better luck, and to have left a more lasting impression on their memory, and that woman, the modest and kindly wife of General Bonaparte, was not descended from royal blood." Then, speaking of the empress that was to be, he concluded, "A good and pious Catholic, she will, like myself, offer up the same prayers for the welfare and happiness of France; I cherish the firm hope that, gracious and kind as she is, she will, while occupying a similar position, revive once more the virtues of Josephine." All of which references to the undoubtedly skittish widow of General de Beauharnais made the satirically inclined bourgeois, who knew the chronique scandaleuse of the Directoire quite as well as Louis-Napoleon, sneer. Said one, "It is a strange present to put into a girl's trousseau, the virtues of Josephine; the Nessus-shirt given to Hercules was nothing to it."

The Faubourg St.-Germain made common cause for once with the Orleanists salons, which were avenging the confiscation of the princes' property; and both, if less brutal than the speaker just quoted, were not less cruel. The daughter had to bear the brunt of the mother's reputation. Public securities went down two francs at the announcement of the marriage. There was but one man who stood steadfast by the Emperor and his bride, Dupin the elder; but his ironical defence of the choice was nearly as bad as his opposition to it could have been. "People care very little as to what I say and think, and perhaps they are right," he re-

marked ; " but still, the Emperor acts more sensibly by marrying the woman he likes than by eating humble-pie and bargaining for some strait-laced, stuck-up German princess, with feet as large as mine. At any rate, when he kisses his wife, it will be because he feels inclined, and not because he feels compelled." *

Nevertheless, amidst all this flouting and jeering, the Emperor and his future consort felt very uncomfortable, but they showed a brave front. He inferred, rather than said to one and all who advanced objections, that his love for Mdlle. de Montijo was not the sole motive for his contemplated union. He wished to induce them into the belief that political motives were not foreign to it—that he was, as it were, flinging the gauntlet to monarchical Europe, which, not content with refusing him a wife, was determined to throw a spoke in his matrimonial wheel.

Unfortunately, he and his bride felt that they could not altogether dispense with the pomp and circumstance of courts. Like his uncle, Napoleon III. was exceedingly fond of grand ceremonial display, and he set his heart upon his Empress having a brilliant escort of fair and illustrious women on the day of her nuptials. To seek for such an escort among the grandes dames of the old noblesse would, he knew, be so much waste of time ; but he was justified in the hope that the descendants of those who owed some of their titles and most of their fortunes to his uncle would prove more

* Dupin's feet were enormous, and, furthermore, invariably shod in thick, hobnailed bluchers. He himself was always jestingly alluding to them ; and one day, on the occasion of a funeral of a friend, which he could not possibly attend, he suggested sending his boots instead. " People send their empty conveyance: I'll send mine," he said.—
EDITOR.

amenable. In this he was mistaken : both the Duchesse de Vicence and the Duchesse des Lesparres, besides several others to whom the highest positions in the Empress's household were offered, declined the honour. The Duc de Bassano did worse. Much as the De Caulaincourts and the De Lesparres owed to the son of the Corsican lawyer, the Marets owed him infinitely more. Yet their descendant, but a few days before the marriage, went about repeating everywhere that he absolutely objected to see his wife figure in the suite of the daughter of the Comtesse de Montijo, "who" (the daughter) "was a little too much of a posthumous child." He not only relented with regard to the duchesse at the eleventh hour, but accepted the office of Grand Chambellan, which office he filled to the end of his life.

In fact, honours and titles went absolutely a-begging in those days. Let me not be misunderstood. There were plenty of men and women ready to accept both, and to deck out their besmirched, though very authentic, scutcheons with them ; but of these the Empress, at any rate, would have none. She would have willingly thrown overboard the whole of her family with its doubtful antecedents, which naturally identified it with that brilliant and cosmopolitan society, "*dans laquelle en fait d'hommes, il n'y a que des déclassés, et en fait de femmes que des trop-bien classées.*" The Bonapartes themselves had, after all, a by no means cleaner bill of health, but, as usual, the woman was made the scapegoat ; for though a good many men of ancient lineage, such as Prince Charles de Beauveau, the Duc de Crillon, the Duc de Beauveau-Craon, the Duc de Montmorency, the Marquis de Laroche-

jaquelein, the Marquis de Gallifet, the Duc de Mouchy, etc., rallied to the new régime, most of them refused at first to bring their wives and daughters to the Tuileries, albeit that they went themselves. When a man neglects to introduce his womenkind to the mistress of the house at which he visits, one generally knows the opinion he and the world entertain—rightly or wrongly—of the status of the lady; and the rule is supposed to hold good everywhere throughout civilized society. Yet the Emperor tolerated this.

Knowing what I do of Napoleon's private character, I am inclined to think that, but for dynastic and political reasons, he would have willingly dispensed with the rigidly virtuous woman at the Tuileries, then and afterwards. But at that moment he was perforce obliged to make advances to her, and the rebuffs received in consequence were taken with a sang-froid which made those who administered them wince more than once. At each renewed refusal he was ready with an epigram: "Encore une dame qui n'est pas assez sure de son passé pour braver l'opinion publique;" "Celle-là, c'est la femme de César, hors de tout soupçon, comme il y a des criminels qui sont hors la loi;" "Madame de — ; il n'y a pas de faux pas dans sa vie, il n'y a qu'un faux papa, le père de ses enfants."

For Louis-Napoleon could be exceedingly witty when he liked, and his wit lost nothing by the manner in which he delivered his witticisms. Not a muscle of his face moved—he merely blinked his eyes.

"Si on avait voulu me donner une princesse allemande," he said to his most intimate friends, "je l'aurais épousée: si je ne l'avais pas autant aimée que j'aime Mademoiselle de Montijo, j'aurais au moins été

plus sûr de sa bâtise; avec une Espagnole on n'est jamais sûr."

Whether he meant the remark for his future consort or not, I am unable to say, but Mademoiselle de Montijo was not witty. There was a kittenish attempt at wit now and then, as when she said, "Ici, il n'y a que moi de légitimiste;" but intellectually she was in no way distinguished from the majority of her countrywomen.* On the other hand, she had an iron will, and was very handsome. A woman's beauty is rarely capable of being analyzed; he who undertakes such a task is surely doomed to the disappointment of the boy who cut the drum to find out where the noise came from.

I cannot say wherein Mdle. de Montijo's beauty lay, but she was beautiful indeed.

Her iron will ably seconded the Emperor's attempts at gaining aristocratic recruits round his standard, and when the Duc de Guiche joined their ranks—the Duc de Guiche whom the Duchesse d'Angoulême had left close upon forty thousand pounds a year—Mdle. de Montijo might well be elated with her success. Still, at the celebration of her nuptials, the gathering was not *le dessus du panier*. The old noblesse had the right to stay away: they had not the right to do what they did. I am perfectly certain of my facts, else I should not have committed them to paper.

As usual, on the day of the ceremony, portraits of the new Empress and her biography were hawked about. There was nothing offensive in either, because

* Mérimée, the author of "Carmen," who knew something of Spanish women, and of the female members of the Montijo family in particular, said that God had given them the choice between love and wit, and that they had chosen the former.—EDITOR.

the risk of printing anything objectionable would have been too great. In reality, the account of her life was rather too laudatory. But there was one picture, better executed than the rest, which bore the words, "*The portrait and the virtues of the Empress; the whole for two sous;*" and that was decidedly the work of the Legitimists and Orleanists combined. I have ample proof of what I say. I heard afterwards that the lithograph had been executed in England.

For several months after the marriage nothing was spoken or thought of at the Tuileries but rules of precedence, court dresses, the revival of certain ceremonies, functions and entertainments that used to be the fashion under the ancien régime. The Empress was especially anxious to model her surroundings, her code of life, upon those of Marie-Antoinette,—"*mon type*," as she familiarly called the daughter of Marie-Thérèse. If, in fact, after a little while, some one had been ill-advised enough to tell her that she had not been born in the Imperial purple, she would have scarcely believed it. When a daughter of the House of Savoy had the misfortune to marry Napoleon's cousin, the Empress thought fit to give the young princess some hints as to her toilette and sundry other things. "You appear to forget, madame," was the answer, "that I was born at a court." Empress Eugénie was furious, and never forgave Princess Clotilde. Her anger reminds me of that of a French detective who, having been charged with a very important case, took up his quarters with a colleague in one of the best Paris hotels, exclusively frequented by foreigners of distinction. He assumed the rôle of a retired ambassador, his comrade enacted

the part of his valet, and both enacted them to perfection. For a fortnight or more they did not make a single mistake in their parts. The ambassador was kind but distant to his servant, the latter never omitted to address him as "Your Excellency." When their mission was at an end, they returned to their ordinary duties; but the "ambassador" had become so identified with his part that, on his colleague addressing him in the usual way, he turned round indignantly, and exclaimed, "You seem to forget yourself. What do you mean by such familiarity?"

Of all the entertainments of the ancien régime lending themselves to sumptuary and scenic display, "la chasse" was undoubtedly the one most likely to appeal to the Imperial couple. Louis-Napoléon had, at any rate, the good sense not to attempt to rival Le Roi-Soleil in spectacular ballet, or to revive the Eglinton tournament on the Place du Carrousel. But—

"Il ne fallait au fier Romain
Que des spectacles et du pain;
Mais aux Français, plus que Romain,
Le spectacle suffit sans pain."

No one was better aware of this tendency of the Parisian to be dazzled by court pageants than the new Emperor, but he was also aware that, except at the risk of making himself and his new court ridiculous, some sort of *raison d'être* would have to be found for such open-air displays in the capital; pending the invention of a plausible pretext, "les grandes chasses" at Compiègne were decided upon. They were to be different from what they had been on the occasion referred to above: special costumes were to be worn,

splendid horses purchased; the most experienced kennel and huntsmen, imbued with all the grand traditions of "la Vénérerie," recruited from the former establishments of the Condés and Rohans;—in short, such éclat was to be given to them as to make them not only the talk of the whole of France, but of Europe besides. The experiment was worth trying. Compiègne was less than a hundred miles from Paris; thousands would flock, not only from the neighbouring towns, but from the capital also, and the glowing accounts they would be sure to bring back would produce their effect. There would be, moreover, less risk of incurring the remarks of an irreverent Paris mob, a mob which instinctively finds out the ridiculous side of every ceremonial instituted by the court, except those calculated to gratify its love of military pomp and splendour. As yet, it was too early to belie the words, "L'empire, c'est la paix;" we had not got beyond the "tame eagle" period, albeit that those behind the scenes, among others a near connection of mine, who was more than half a Frenchman himself, predicted that the predatory instincts would soon reveal themselves, against the Russian bear probably, and in conjunction with the British lion,—if not in conjunction with the latter, perhaps against him.

At any rate, les grandes chasses et fêtes de Compiègne formed the first item of that programme of "La France qui s'amuse,"—a programme and play which, for nearly eighteen years, drew from all parts of the civilized world would-be critics and spectators, few of whom perceived that the theatre was undermined, the piece running to a fatal denouement, and the bill itself the most fraudulent concoction that had

ever issued from the sanctum of a bogus impressario. But had not Lamartine, only a few years previously, suggested, as it were, the tendency of the piece, when, in the Chamber of Deputies, he said, "Messieurs, j'ai l'honneur et le regret de vous avertir que la France s'ennuie"? Louis-Napoleon was determined that no such reproach should be made during his reign. He probably did not mean his fireworks to end in the conflagration of Bazeilles, and to read the criticism on his own drama at Wilhelmshöhe, but he should have held a tighter hand over his stage-managers. Some of these were now getting their reward for having contributed to the efficient representation of the prologue, which one might entitle "the Coup d'Etat." General Magnan was appointed grand veneur—let us say, master of the buckhounds,—with a stipend of a hundred thousand francs; Comte Edgar Ney, his chief coadjutor, with forty thousand francs. History sees the last of the latter gentleman on a cold, dull, drizzly September morning, of the year 1870. He is seated in an open char-à-bancs, by the side of some Prussian officers, and the vehicle, in the rear of that of his Imperial master, is on its way to the Belgian frontier, en route for Cassel. He is pointing to some artillery which, notwithstanding its French model, is being driven by German gunners. "A qui ces canons-là?" "Ils ne sont pas des nôtres, monsieur," is the courteous and guarded reply. Verily, his father's exit, after all is said and done, was a more dignified one. Michel Ney, at any rate, fell pierced by bullets; the pity was that they were not the enemy's. In addition to the grand veneur and premier veneur, there were three lieutenants de vénerie,

a capitaine des chasses à tir,—whom we will call a sublimated head-gamekeeper;—and all these dignitaries had other emoluments and charges besides, because Louis-Napoleon, to his credit be it said, never forgot a friend.

The whole of the "working personnel" was, as I have already said, recruited from the former establishments of the Condés at Chantilly, of the late Duc d'Orléans, the Ducs de Nemours and d'Aumale; and such men as La Feuille, whose real name was Fergus, and La Trace could not have failed to make comparisons between their old masters and the new, not always to the advantage of the latter. For though the spectacle was magnificent enough, there was little or no hunting, as far as the majority of guests were concerned. After a great deal of deliberation, dark green cloth, with crimson velvet collars, cuffs, and facings, and gold lace, had been adopted. In Louis XV.'s time, and in that of the latter Bourbons, the colour had been blue with silver lace; but for this difference the costume was virtually the same, even to the buckskins, jackboots, and the "lampion," also edged with gold instead of silver.* The Emperor's and Empress's had a trimming of white ostrich-feathers. The dress could not be worn, however, by any but the members of the Imperial household, without special permission. The latter, of course, wore it by right; but even men like the Duc de Vicence, the Baron d'Offrémont, the Marquis de Gallifet, the Marquis de Cadore, women like the Comtesse de Pourtalès, the Comtesse de Brigode, the Marquise de Contades, who held no special charge

* The lampion was the three-cornered hat, cocked on all sides alike in the shape of a spout, and stiffened with wire.—EDITOR.

at court, had to receive "le bouton" before they could don it.*

The locale of these gatherings differed according to the seasons. Fontainebleau was chosen for the spring ones, but throughout the reign Compiègne always offered the most brilliant spectacle, especially after the Crimean war, when Napoleon III. was tacitly admitted to the family circle of the crowned heads of Europe. The shooting-parties were a tribute offered to the taste of the English visitors, who, after that period, became more numerous every succeeding autumn, and who, accustomed as they were to their own magnificent meets and lavish hospitality at the most renowned country seats, could not help expressing their surprise at the utterly reckless expenditure; and, if the truth must be told, enjoyed the freedom from all restraint, though it was cunningly hidden beneath an apparently very formidable code of courtly etiquette. As one of these distinguished Englishmen said, "They have done better than banish Mrs. Grundy; they have given her a special invitation, and drugged her the moment she came in."

The Court invariably arrived on the first of November, and generally stayed for three weeks or a month, according to the date fixed for the opening of the Chambers. From that moment the town, a very sleepy though exceedingly pretty one, became like a fair. Unless you had engaged your room beforehand at one of the hotels, the chances were a thousand to one in favour of your having to roam the streets;

* "Wearing the king's button" is a very old French sporting term, signifying permission to wear the dress or the buttons or both, similar to those of the monarch when following the hounds.—EDITOR.

for there were hundreds and hundreds of sight-seers, French as well as foreign, desirous of following the hounds, which every one was free to do. In addition to these, many functionaries, not sufficiently important to be favoured with an invitation to the Château, but eager for an opportunity of attracting the notice of the sovereign—for Napoleon was a very impulsive monarch, who often took sudden fancies,—had to be accommodated, not to mention flying columns of the *demi-monde*, “*pas trop bien assurées sur la fidélité de leurs protecteurs en-titre et voulant les sauvegarder contre les attaques de leurs rivales dans l’entourage impérial.*” What with these and others, a room, on the top story, was often quoted at sixty or seventy francs per day. I know a worthy lieutenant of the cavalry of the Garde who made a pretty sum, for two years running, by engaging three apartments at each of the five good hotels, for the whole of the Emperor’s stay. His regiment was quartered at Compiègne, and, as a matter of course, his friends from Paris applied to him.

An amusing incident happened in connection with this scarcity of accommodation. The French railways in those days got a great many of their rails from England. The representative of one of these English makers found out, however, that the profits on his contracts were pretty well being swallowed up by the *baksheesh* he had to distribute among the various government officials and others. In his perplexity, he sought advice of an English nobleman, who had his *grandes et petites entrées* to the Tuileries, and the latter promised to get him an audience of the Emperor. It so happened that the Court was on the

eve of its departure, but Napoleon wrote that he would see the agent at Compiègne. On the day appointed, the Englishman came. Having made up his mind to combine pleasure with business, he had brought his portmanteau, in order to stay for a day or so. Previous to the interview, he had applied at every hotel, at every private house where there was a chance of getting a room, but without success. His luggage was in a cab on the Place du Château. Napoleon was, as usual, very kind, promised him his aid, but asked him to let the matter rest until the next day, when he would have an opportunity of consulting a high authority on the subject who was coming down that very afternoon. "Give me your address, and I will let you know, the first thing in the morning, when I can see you," said the Emperor in English.

The Englishman looked very embarrassed. "I have no address, sire. I have been unable to get a room anywhere," he replied.

"Oh, I dare say we can put you up somewhere here," laughed the Emperor, and called to one of his aides-de-camp, to whom he gave instructions.

The Englishman and the officer departed together, but the Château was quite as full as the rest of the town.

"I'll ask Baptiste," said the officer at last, having tried every possible means.

Baptiste was one of the Empress's principal grooms, and very willing to help; but, alas! he had only a very small room himself, and that was shared by his wife.

"If monsieur don't mind," said Baptiste, "I will make him up a good bed in one of the fourgons"—one of the luggage-vans.

So said, so done. The Englishman slept like a top, being very tired,—too much like a top, for he never stirred until he found himself rudely awakened by a heavy bundle of rugs and other paraphernalia being flung on his chest. He was at the station. Baptiste had simply forgotten to mention the fact of his having transformed the fourgon into a bedroom; the doors that stood ajar during the night had been closed without the servant looking inside; and when the occupant was discovered he was, as Racine says,—

*“ Dans le simple appareil
D’une beauté qu’on vient d’arracher au sommeil.”*

When he told the Emperor, the latter laughed, “as he had never seen him laugh before,” said the aide-de-camp, who had been the innocent cause of the mischief by appealing to Baptiste.

The victim of the misadventure did not mind it much. For many years afterwards, he averred that the sight of Compiègne in those days would have compensated for the inconvenience of sleeping on a garden seat. What was more, he and his firm were never troubled any more with inexorable demands for baksheesh.

He was right; the sight of Compiègne in those days was very beautiful. There was a good deal of the histrionic mixed up with it, but it was very beautiful. In addition to the bands of the garrison, a regimental band of the infantry of the Garde played in the courtyard of the Château; the streets were alive with crowds dressed in their best; almost every house was gay with bunting, the only exceptions being those of the Legimitists, who, unlike Achilles, did not even skulk in their tents, but shut up their establishments

and flitted on the eve of the arrival of the Court, after having despatched an address of unswerving loyalty to the Comte de Chambord. After a little while, Napoleon did not trouble about these expressions of hostility to his dynasty, though he could not forbear to ask bitterly, now and then, whether the Comte de Chambord or the Comte de Paris under a regency could have made the country more prosperous than he had attempted to do, than he succeeded in doing. And truth compels one to admit that France's material prosperity was not a sham in those days, whatever else may have been; for in those days, as I have already remarked, the end was still distant, and there were probably not a thousand men in the whole of Europe who foresaw the nature of it, albeit that a thirtieth or a fortieth part of them may have been in Compiègne at the very time when the Emperor, in his elegantly appointed break, drove from the Place du Château amidst the acclamations of the serried crowds lining the roads.

On the day of the arrival of the Emperor—the train reached Compiègne about four—there was neither dinner-party nor reception at the Château. The civil and military authorities of Compiègne went to the station to welcome the Imperial couple, the rangers of Compiègne and Laigue forests waited upon his Majesty to arrange the programme, and generally joined the Imperial party at dinner: but the fêtes did not commence until the second day after the arrival, *i.e.* with the advent of the first batch of guests, who reached the Château exactly twenty-four hours after their hosts.

CHAPTER V.

Society during the Empire—The series of guests at Compiègne—The amusements—The absence of musical taste in the Bonapartes—The programme on the first, second, third, and fourth days—An anecdote of Lafontaine, the actor—Theatrical performances and balls—The expenses of the same—The theatre at Compiègne—The guests, male and female—"Neck or nothing" for the latter, uniform for the former—The rest have to take "back seats"—The selection of guests among the notabilities of Compiègne—A mayor's troubles—The Empress's and the Emperor's conflicting opinions with regard to female charms—Bassano in "hot water"—Tactics of the demi-mondaines—Improvement from the heraldic point of view in the Empress's entourage—The cocodettes—Their dress—Worth—When every pretext for a change of toilette is exhausted, the court ladies turn themselves into ballerinas—"Le Diable à Quatre" at Compiègne—The ladies appear at the ball afterwards in their gauze skirts—The Emperor's dictum with regard to ballet-dancers and men's infatuation for them—The Emperor did not like stupid women—The Emperor's "eye" for a handsome woman—The Empress does not admire the instinct—William I. of Prussia acts as comforter—The hunt—Actors, "supers," and spectators—"La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas"—The Imperial procession—The Empress's and Emperor's unpunctuality—Louis-Napoleon not a "well-dressed man"—The Empress wished to get back before dark—The reason of this wish—Though unpunctual, punctual on hunt-days—The police measures at those gatherings—M. Hyrvoix and M. Boitelle—The Empress did not like the truth, the Emperor did—Her anxiety to go to St. Lazare.

THE guests were divided into five series, each of which stayed four days exclusive of the day of their arrival and that of their departure. Each series consisted of between eighty and ninety guests.

The amusements provided were invariably the same for each series of guests. On the day of their arrival there was the dinner, followed by charades, and a carpet

dance to the accompaniment of the piano—or, to speak by the card, of the piano-organ. It was an instrument similar to that which nowadays causes so much delight to the children in the streets of London, and, as far as I can remember, the first of its kind I had ever seen. The male guests, and not always the youngest, relieved one another in turning the handle. Mechanical as was the task, it required a certain ear for time, and they were often found sadly wanting in that respect. It was rather comical to see a grave minister of State solemnly grinding out tunes, and being called to task every now and again for his incapacity. The worst offender, the most hopeless performer, was undoubtedly the Emperor himself. The Bonapartes are one and all devoid of the slightest taste for music. I think it is De Bourrienne—but I will not be certain—who speaks of the founder of the dynasty humming as he went along from one apartment to another. “*Et Dieu sait comme il chantait faux,*” adds the chronicler in despair. That part of the great man’s mantle had decidedly fallen upon his nephew. I remember the latter trying to distinguish himself on that piano-organ one evening. M. de Maupas, who was the prefect of police at the time of the Coup d’Etat, and minister of police afterwards, was among the guests. The ambulant musician in Paris has to get a kind of licence from the prefecture of police, the outward sign of which is a brass badge, which he is bound to wear suspended from his button-hole. While the Emperor was trying to make the company waltz, one of the ladies suddenly turned round to M. de Maupas: “*Si jamais l’empereur vous demande la permission de jouer dans la rue, refusez lui, mon-*

sieur; refusez lui, pour l'amour du ciel et de la musique," she said aloud: and the Emperor himself could not help smiling at the well-deserved rebuke. "Madame," he replied, "if ever I am reduced to such a strait, I will take you into partnership: I will make you sing, and I will collect the pence." In spite of his musical deficiencies the Emperor was right; the lady was Madame Conneau, who had and has still one of the most beautiful voices ever heard on the professional or amateur stage.

On the first day following that of the arrival of the guests, there was a shooting-party, or, rather, there were two—one in the home park for the Emperor himself, who was not a bad shot, and a dozen of the more important personages; another in the forest. Those who did not care for sport were at liberty to remain with the ladies, who, under the direction of the Empress, proceeded to the lawn. Croquet, as far as I know, had not been invented then, but archery lent itself to posing and flirtation quite as well, and the costumes worn on such occasions were truly a sight for the gods.

On the evening of that day, there was a performance in the theatre, built for the express purpose by Louis-Philippe, but which had been considerably embellished since. The companies of the Comédie-Française, the Odéon, the Gymnase, the Vaudeville, and the Palais-Royal took it in turns. Only the members of the Comédie-Française had the privilege of paying their respects in the Imperial box. It was during one of the performances of the Gymnase company that the following amusing incident occurred. They were playing "Le Fils de Famille" of Bayard and De

Biéville,* and the Emperor was strolling in the lobbies before the performance, when he noticed an old colonel of lancers, whom he did not remember to have seen among the guests during the daytime, but who seemed perfectly at home. He had not even donned his full regimentals.

"Voilà un vrai, beau militaire," said the sovereign to one of his aides-de-camp; "allez demander son nom."

The aide-de-camp returned in a moment. "Il s'appelle Lafontaine, sire; et il appartient au régiment du Gymnase."

"Comment, au régiment du Gymnase?"

"Mais oui, sire; c'est Lafontaine, le comédien."

In fact, the assumption was so thoroughly realistic, that even a better judge than Louis-Napoleon might have been deceived by it.

Those performances were really most brilliant affairs, and an invitation to them was only less highly prized than that to the ball which always followed the play on November 15th, the Empress's fête-day.† The cost of each performance was estimated at between twenty and thirty thousand francs, according to the company performing. I am repeating the official statement, though inclined to think it somewhat exaggerated. Except the Opéra or Opéra-Comique, there was not then, nor is there now, a theatre in Paris whose nightly receipts, with "the greatest success," exceed seven or eight thousand francs. Allowing for an additional three thousand

* Known on the English stage as the "Queen's Shilling," by Mr. Godfrey.—EDITOR.

† The Sainte-Eugénie, according to the Church Calendar. In France, it is not the birthday, but the day of the patron-saint whose name one bears, which is celebrated.—EDITOR.

francs for railway travelling and sundry expenses, I fail to see how the remainder of the sum was disbursed, unless it was in douceurs to the performers. There is less doubt, however, about the expenses of the Château during this annual series of fêtes. It could not have been less than forty-five thousand francs per diem, and must have often risen to fifty thousand francs, exclusive of the cost of the theatrical performances, because the luxe displayed on these occasions was truly astonishing—I had almost said appalling.

The theatre was built on the old-fashioned principle, and what we call stalls were not known in those days. There was something analogous to them at the Opéra and the Théâtre-Français, but they were exclusively reserved to the male sex. Both these theatres still keep up the same traditions in that respect. At Compiègne the whole of the ground floor, parterre, or pit, as we have misnamed it—"groundlings" is a much more appropriate word, perhaps, than "pittites"—was occupied by the officers of all grades of the regiments quartered at Compiègne and in the department. The chefs de corps and the chief dignitaries of State filled the amphitheatre, which rose in a gentle slope from the back of the parterre to just below the first tier of boxes, or rather to the balcony tier, seeing that the only box on it was the Imperial one. The latter, however, took up much more than the centre, for it had been constructed to seat about two hundred persons. Only a slight partition, elbow high, divided it from the rest of the tier, whence the sterner sex was absolutely banished. The display of bare arms and shoulders was something marvellous, for they were by no means equally worthy of admiration, and the stranger, ignorant of the court

regulations, must have often asked himself why certain ladies should have been so reckless as to invite comparison with their more favoured sisters. It was because there was no choice. The slightest gauze was rigorously prohibited, and woe to the lady who ventured to disobey these regulations. One of the chambellans was sure to request her to retire. "L'épaule ou l'épaulette" was the title of a comic song of those days, in allusion to the Empress's determination to suffer none but resplendent uniforms and ball dresses within sight of her. If I remember aright, the chorus went like this—

"Je ne porte pas l'épaulette,
Je ne puis me décoll'ter,
Je ne suis qu'un vieux bonhomme,
Donc, je ne suis pas invité."

For even the guests in plain evening dress were mercilessly relegated to the tier above that of the Imperial box, and, even when there, were not permitted to occupy the first rows. These also were reserved for the fairer portion of humanity.

This fairer portion of humanity, thus ostensibly privileged, embittered the lives of the poor mayor and sub-prefect of Compiègne. The wives of the local notabilities and of the government officials, in addition to those of some of the landed gentry of the Empire, were not only anxious to be present at these gatherings, but generally insisted on having the front seats, at any rate in the second circle. Their applications, transmitted by these dignitaries to the Duc de Bassano, were always in excess of the room at his disposal, and, being an utter stranger to all these ladies, he had virtually to choose at random, or, if not at random, to be guided by the mayor and sub-prefect, who were con-

sulted, not with regard to the greater or lesser degree of opulent charms and comeliness of features of these fair applicants, but with regard to their social status and fair fame. Now, it so happens that in France "*L'amour fait des siennes*" in the provinces as well as in the capital; he only disdains what Mirabeau used to call "*les fées concombres*." The Empress, provided the shoulders and arms were bare, did not trouble much about either their colour or "moulded outline;" the Emperor, on the contrary, objected, both from personal as well as artistic reasons, to have the curved symmetry of the two circles marred by the introduction of so many living problems of Euclid; and it really seemed as if the devil wanted to have all the good shapes to himself, for the reputedly virtuous spinsters, widows, and matrons were angular enough to have satisfied a tutor of mathematics. There was a dilemma: if they were put in the front rows, the Emperor scolded Bassano, who in his turn scolded the mayor and the sub-prefect. If the less virtuous but more attractive were put in the front rows, there was frequently a small scandal; for the Empress, at the first sight of them, had them expelled, after which she scolded Bassano, who avenged himself for his having being reprimanded on the mayor and sub-prefect. Furthermore, the contingent from Paris, some of whom were often provided with letters of introduction from influential personages to the latter gentlemen, were not always without reproach though ever without fear; but how were two provincial magistrates to know this? Those sirens could almost impose upon them with impunity, and did; so, upon the whole, the magistrates did not have a pleasant time of it, for in the case of the former damsels or

veuves de Malabar both the Emperor and the Empress were equally strict—though, perhaps, from utterly different motives.

Nevertheless, the esclandres were comparatively rare, and the house itself presented a sight unparalleled perhaps throughout the length and breadth of Europe. At nine o'clock, Comte Bacciocchi, the first chambellan, in his court dress descended the few steps leading from the foyer to the Imperial box, and, advancing to the front, announced, "The Emperor." Every one rose and remained standing until the Emperor and Empress, who entered immediately afterwards, had seated themselves in the crimson velvet and gilt armchairs which the gentlemen-in-waiting (*les chambellans de service*) rolled forward.

I have spoken elsewhere of the immediate entourage of the Imperial hosts, and may therefore pass them over in silence here. As the Napoleonic dynasty became apparently more consolidated both at home and abroad, this entourage gradually changed—though no truthful observer could have honestly averred that the change was for the better. The *décavés* and the *déclassées* of the first period disappeared altogether, or underwent a truly marvellous financial and social metamorphosis: the men, by means of speculations, chiefly connected with the "Haussmannizing" of Paris, the successful carrying out of which was greatly facilitated by their position at court; the women by marriages, the conditions of which I prefer not to discuss. An undoubtedly genuine leaven of names to be found in "D'Hozier,"* came to swell the ranks of

* "D'Hozier," the French "Burke," so named after its founder, Pierre D'Hozier, the creator of the science of French genealogy.—EDITOR.

the hitherto somewhat shady courtiers of both sexes. Unfortunately, their blood was not only thicker than water, and consequently more easily heated, but they presumed upon the blueness of it to set public opinion at defiance.

"Ce qui, chez les mortels, est une effronterie
Entre nous autres demi-dieux
N'est qu'honnête galanterie."

Thus wrote the Duchesse du Maine * to her brother, of whom she was perhaps a little more fond than even their blood-relationship warranted. This privilege of stealing the horse, while the meaner-born might not even look over the hedge, was claimed by the sons and the daughters of the old noblesse, who condescended to grace the court of Napoleon III., with a cynicism worthy of the most libertine traditions of the ancien régime; and neither the Empress nor the Emperor did anything to discountenance the claim. The former, provided that "tout ce passait en famille," closed her eyes to many things she ought not to have tolerated. At the Tuileries, a certain measure of decorum was preferred; at Compiègne and Fontainebleau, where the house was "packed" as it were, the most flagrant eccentricities, to call them by no harsher name, were not only permitted, but tacitly encouraged by the Empress. This was especially the case when the first series of guests was gone. It generally included the most serious portion of the visitors, "les ennuyeurs,

* Anne, Louise, Benedicte de Bourbon, Princesse de Condé, who married the Duc du Maine, the illegitimate son of Louis XIV. and Madame de Montespan. She disliked her husband, whom she considered socially beneath her, and who was very ugly besides. The lines quoted above are probably not hers, but Malezieu's, "her poet in ordinary," who also organized her amateur theatricals.—EDITOR.

les empêcheurs de danser en rond,"* as they were called. The ladies belonging to, or classed in that category, presented, no doubt, a striking contrast to those of the succeeding series, in which the English element was not always conspicuous by its absence. The costumes of the latter were something wonderful to behold. The cloth skirt, which had then been recently introduced from England, and the cloth dress, draped elegantly over it, enabled their wearers to defy all kinds of weather. And as they went tramping down the muddy roads, their coquettish little hats daintily poised on enormous chignons, their walking boots displaying more than the regulation part of ankle, the less sophisticated Compiègnois stared with all their might at the strange company from the Château, and no wonder. Still, the surprise of the inhabitants was small compared to that of the troopers of the garrison at the invasion of their riding-school by such a contingent, which indulged in ring-tilting, not unfrequently in tent-pegging, and, more frequently still, "in taking a header into space," to the great amusement of their companions.

In those days, Worth was not quite king; the cocottes of the Imperial circle were still prophesying on their own account. The "arsenal des modes," as Madame Emile de Girardin had boastingly called Paris but ten years previously, had as yet not been boldly taken by storm by a native of bucolic Lincolnshire. But in a very short time he became the absolute autocrat in matters of feminine apparel. It was not even an enlightened despotism. His will

* Idiomatically, "the bores, the spoil-sports, or wet-blankets."—
EDITOR.

was law. Every different entertainment required its appropriate costume, and the costume was frequently the sole pretext for the entertainment. And when the ingenuity in devising both was in danger of becoming exhausted, the supreme resource of these ladies was to turn themselves into ballerinas ; not into ballerinas as King Bomba, or the Comte Sosthène de la Rochefoucauld, or M. Rouher would have had them, but into ballerinas with the shortest of gauze skirts and pink silk fleshings.

One year, I am not certain of the exact one,—I know that the future Emperor of Germany was there,—the ladies hit upon the idea of giving a surprise to the Emperor and Empress on the occasion of the latter's fête-day. A ballet-master was sent for in hot haste from Paris, and "*Le Diable à Quatre*" put in rehearsal. Unlike Peter the Great, who had a soldier hanged—he said shooting was too good for him—for having represented a disreputable character on the stage, the Emperor professed himself exceedingly pleased ; and the ladies, among whom was Princess von Metternich, were sent for from the Imperial box to be complimented by the sovereign. At the ball which followed the entertainment, they appeared in their theatrical dresses. Every one was delighted. "*Après tout,*" said Napoleon, blinking his eyes, "*avec cette manie des hommes de courir après des danseuses, il vaut mieux leur en fournir de bonne maison.*"

The philosophy was unassailable, and, to a certain extent, acted upon by its professor. Napoleon only admired dancers on the stage. He thought, with Balzac, that the extraordinary physical strain upon the lower extremities necessarily interfered with the

intellectual development "at the other end." "L'esprit de la danseuse est dans ses jambes, et je n'aime pas les femmes bêtes," he remarked; for the Emperor, like most of the members of his family, did not scruple to apply the right word, when talking to his familiars.

Nevertheless, until he was assured of the stupidity of a woman by more intimate acquaintance, he was too much inclined to be attracted by the first handsome face he saw, or, to speak by the card, by the first handsome face he picked out for himself. The moment he was seated by the side of the Empress in the Imperial box, during one of those performances I mentioned just now, he swept the house with his opera-glass, and unerringly the glass stopped at what was really the handsomest woman in the house, whether she was seated on the tier with him or in the upper one—of course, I mean "the handsomest woman" among the strangers, because on such occasions the Emperor paid but little attention to those who were generally around him. The Empress was fain to put up with these peccadilloes: she could not be always running away to Schwalbach or to Scotland; besides, she knew that she would have to come back again. Some months previous to the performance of "Le Diable à Quatre," she went to the former place to hide her mortification. William of Prussia was at Baden-Baden at the time, and he immediately left the delightful society and the magnificent roulades of Pauline Lucca to offer his sympathies to the Griselda who had fled from her home troubles, forgetting that there was another one at home, who would have even been more glad of his company.

On the day after the shooting-party and the

theatrical performance, there was generally an excursion to Pierrefonds, and afterwards to the magnificent Roman remains at Champieu. In the evening there were charades and carpet dances as usual.

The third day was always reserved for the most important part of the programme—the stag-hunt. Candidly speaking, I doubt whether Napoleon, though a very excellent horseman, cared much for this sport, as conducted on the grand traditional lines of the French “code of vénerie.” His main object personally was a good stiff run with the hounds, such as he had been used to in England, troubling himself little whether the pack kept the scent or not. In fact, there were generally two packs out, one of purely English breed, which was followed by the Emperor and his guests; the other French, followed by the serious lovers of sport, who, as a rule, caught at every pretext to get away from the magnificently apparelled crowd, driving or riding in the wake of the sovereign. Among the former there was a considerable sprinkling of the landed gentry of the neighbourhood, monarchists, and legitimists to a man, some of whom did not even condescend to honour the Emperor with a salute. Compiègne, Sénart, etc., were, after all, public property, and they could do as they liked, though I have got an idea that this wilful slight was an instance of singular bad taste on the part of these gentlemen.

The spot fixed for the meet was invariably the large clearing known as the Carrefour du Puits-du-Roi, whence radiated eight immense avenues, stretching as far as the uttermost confines of the forest of Com-

piègne. The spot, apart from its associations with royalty, from the days of Clovis up to our own, was admirably chosen, the *mise-en-scène* worthy of the greatest stage-manager on record. The huge centre itself was kept clear by the *gendarmes de chasse*—a cross between a mounted constable and a ranger—from any but the officers of the garrison on horseback and other persons privileged to join the Emperor's suite. Six of the avenues were free to the pedestrians, who could watch every movement from their vantage point; the seventh was set apart for carriages of all sorts, from the humble *shandrydan* of the local notary and doctor to the magnificent break of the neighbouring landed proprietor, or the less correctly but more showily appointed *barouches* of the leaders of provincial society, who rarely missed an opportunity of attending these gatherings, where there were so many chances of coming in contact with the court. Relegated for at least ten months of the year—allowing for an annual visit to the capital—to the dull, humdrum, though often pretentious round of entertainments of her own circle, the Comtesse d'Esbarnas,* whether young or old, handsome or the reverse, matron or widow, of patrician or plebeian origin, sedulously watched the yearly recurring time and tide that might lead to a permanent footing at the Tuileries. What has happened once may happen again. Agnès Sorel, Diane de Poitiers, Gabrielle d'Estrées, Louise de la Vallière, let alone Jeanne Bécu and Jeanne Poisson,† had by no means exhausted the

* A character of one of Molière's plays, who lends her name to the play itself, and who, with her provincial clique, apes the manners of the court.

† Mesdames Du Barry and Pompadour.

possibilities of sudden elevations to within a step of the throne. These new aspirants would be content with a less giddy position. And who could say what might happen? Had not Alfred de Musset, the daring poet of "les grandes passions," written a play entitled "Il ne faut jurer de rien." Assuredly what had happened once might happen again. Meanwhile the pleasure of watching all this splendour was worth coming for.

The latter proposition hardly admitted of discussion. The sight was truly worth coming for. Though the Imperial suite never made its appearance before one, the main arteries of the forest became crowded as early as eleven. Half an hour later came La Trace and La Feuille with their équipage.* The kennelmen and huntsmen in full dress gathered round a roaring fire, their hounds lying at their feet. The stablemen and grooms, in undress livery of green and brown, walking the hunters of the Emperor and his suite to and fro, presented a picture full of colour and animation.

As a rule the Imperial cortége was punctual on those occasions, though it was often remiss in that respect at gatherings of a different nature. Among the familiars at the Tuileries the blame for this general unpunctuality was attributed in an equal measure to both the Emperor and the Empress. The latter dressed very slowly, and the former wanted to dress too quickly. The result of this difference of habit was always manifest to the most casual observer. The Empress, after the most fatiguing day or soirée, always looked as if she had just left her dressing-room,

* "Équipage" is the right word. Applied to any but military or hunting uses, it is out of place, though frequently thus used.—EDITOR.

the Emperor at the beginning of the same as if he had scarcely been in it. But on "grand hunt-days" the Empress was never a minute late; and the reason, apart from the natural wish to exercise "*la politesse des rois*," exactitude, was a curious one, but for the truth of which I can vouch. It gets dark early in November, and the Empress dreaded to be overtaken by darkness in the forest, even amidst a crowd. It reminded her of a disagreeable episode during her first stay at Compiègne, when she was still Mdle. Eugénie de Montijo. She and her future husband had got separated from the rest of the party. It was never accurately known what happened, but she was found sitting quietly but sorely distressed on her horse by M. de Saint-Paul, the sub-ranger, who escorted her back to the Château. She explained her lonely and uncomfortable position by the fact that her companion's horse had suddenly taken the bit between its teeth. The explanation was a lame one, seeing that the Prince-President, on his return, hours before, had looked perfectly composed and not as much as mentioned her name. The truth leaked out afterwards. Enraged at Mdle. de Montijo's refusal to grant him a clandestine interview for that night, her princely suitor had left her to find her way back as best she could.

Invariably, then, at the stroke of one, the Imperial procession was signalled, for it was nothing less than a procession. At its head rode the chief ranger of Compiègne, Baron de Wimpffen, in a magnificent hunting-coat of green and gold, the laced tricornered hat, surmounted by a bunch of black plumes, jack-boots, and white doeskins. Then came the Imperial

break, drawn by six horses, mounted by postilions in powdered wigs, the Imperial host and hostess on the front seat, the members of the family, or some illustrious guests, behind; the rest of the breaks were only four-horsed, and the procession was closed by the carriage of M. Hyrvoix, the chief of the secret police. In Paris this arrangement was reversed, and M. Hyrvoix, who had the rank of a prefect, and took his place as such at all public functions, preceded instead of following the Imperial carriage.

I am inclined to think, notwithstanding the frequent outcries against the secret police during the second empire, that M. Hyrvoix was a thoroughly upright and conscientious servant. Unfortunately for himself and his Imperial masters, his position was a difficult one; for though professedly employed to gauge public opinion with regard to the dynasty, his reports to that effect were not always received with the consideration due to honest truth, at any rate by the Empress. Throughout these pages, I have endeavoured as far as possible to jot down my recollections in a kind of chronological order, rather than in the order they occurred to me; but in this, as in many other instances, I have been obliged to anticipate the course of events lest they should slip my memory, for I had no documents to go by, and also to avoid unnecessary repetitions. This particular part of my somewhat disjointed narrative was meant to deal with the festivities at Compiègne and the company there; on reading it over, I find that it has developed into a fragment of biography of the Emperor and his Consort. As such, the following stories will throw a valuable side light on their different dispositions.

When the news of Emperor Maximilian's death reached Paris, there was the rumbling of a storm which foreboded no good. For days before, there had been vague rumours of the catastrophe. It had been whispered at the annual distribution of prizes at the Collège de France, where one of the young Cavaignacs had refused to receive his reward at the hands of the Prince Imperial. In short, indignation was rife among all classes. The Empress, on hearing of the insult, had burst into hysterical tears, and been obliged to leave the reception-rooms. In short, a dark cloud hung over the Tuileries. I have spoken elsewhere of the Mexican expedition, so need not enlarge upon it here. We will take it that both Napoleon and his wife were altogether blameless in the affair—which was by no means the case,—but a moment's reflection ought to have shown them that appearances were against them, and that the discontent expressed was so far justified. I am under the impression that Napoleon himself looked at it in that way: he bowed to the storm; he regretted, but did not resent people speaking ill of him. Not so the Empress: the truth was only welcome to her when it flattered her; she really fancied herself an autocrat by the Grace of God, as the previous Bourbons interpreted the term. In spite of all that has been said about her amiability, about her charity, Eugénie was in reality cruel at heart. No woman, not cruel, could have taken the principal part in a scene which I will describe presently. But she was vindictive also, and, what was worse, blindly vindictive. Though firmly convinced that she reigned by right divine, she had felt more than once that private revenge on "the people" who abused her was beyond

her power. She not only fretted accordingly, but often vented her wrath on the first victim that came to hand, albeit that the latter was generally the mere innocent conveyance through which the voice of "the people" reached her. M. Hyrvoix, in virtue of his functions, often found himself the echo of that voice. He was generally the first of all the officials to present his daily report. The Emperor gave him his cue by asking, "What do the people say?"

On that particular morning, after the death of Maximilian had become known, the answer came not as readily as usual; for the chief of the secret police was not in the habit of mincing matters. This time, however, M. Hyrvoix kept silent for a while, then replied, "The people do not say anything, sire."

Napoleon must have noticed the hesitating manner; for he said at once, "You are not telling me the truth. What do the people say?"

"Well, sire, if you wish to know, not only the people, but every one is deeply indignant and disgusted with the consequences of this unfortunate war. It is commented upon everywhere in the selfsame spirit. They say it is the fault of——"

"The fault of whom?" repeated Napoleon.

Whereupon M. Hyrvoix kept silent once more.

"The fault of whom?" insisted Napoleon.

"Sire," stammered M. Hyrvoix, "in the time of Louis XVI. people said, 'It is the fault of the Austrian woman.'"

"Yes, go on."

"Under Napoleon III. people say, 'It is the fault of the Spanish woman.'"

The words had scarcely left M. Hyrvoix' lips, when

a door leading to the inner apartments opened, and the Empress appeared on the threshold. "She looked like a beautiful fury," said M. Hyrvoix to his friend, from whom I have got the story. "She wore a white dressing-gown, her hair was waving on her shoulders, and her eyes shot flames. She hissed, rather than spoke, as she bounded towards me; and, ridiculous as it may seem, I felt afraid for the moment. 'You will please repeat what you said just now, M. Hyrvoix,' she gasped in a voice hoarse with anger.

"'Certainly, madame,' I replied, 'seeing that I am here to speak the truth, and, as such, your Majesty will pardon me. I told the Emperor that the Parisians spoke of 'the Spanish woman,' as they spoke seventy-five and eighty years ago of 'the Austrian woman.'"

"'The Spanish woman! the Spanish woman!' she jerked out three or four times—and I could see that her hands were clenched;—'I have become French, but I will show my enemies that I can be Spanish when occasion demands it.'

"With this, she left as suddenly as she had come, taking no notice of the Emperor's uplifted hand to detain her. When the door closed upon her, I said to the Emperor, 'I am more than grieved, sire, that I spoke.'

"'You did your duty,' he said, grasping my hand."

As a matter of course, the threat to show her enemies that she could be Spanish when occasion required was, in this instance, an empty one, because "the enemies" happened to be legion. A scapegoat was found, however, in the honest functionary who had,

in the exercise of his duty, frankly warned the Emperor of the ugly things that were said about her. Next morning, M. Hyrvoix was appointed Receiver-General for one of the departments—that is, exiled to the provinces.

This system of ostracism was indiscriminately applied to all who happened to offend her. Unfortunately, the slightest divergence of opinion on the most trifling matter was construed into an offence; hence in a few years the so-called counsellors around the Emperor were simply so many automata, moving at her will, and at her will only. Men who ventured to think for themselves were removed, or else voluntarily retired from the precincts of the court sooner than submit to a tyranny, not based like that of Catherine II. or Elizabeth upon great intellectual gifts, but upon the wayward impulses of a woman in no way distinguished mentally from the meanest of her sex, except by an overweening ambition and an equally overweening conceit.

And as nothing is so apt to breed injustice as injustice, men, who might have proved the salvation of the Second Empire in its hour of direst need, were absolutely driven into opposition, and so blinded by resentment as to be unable to distinguish any longer between France and those who impelled her to her ruin.

Lest I should be taxed with exaggeration, a few instances among the many will suffice. One evening, in the course of those charades of which I have already spoken, some of the performers, both men and women, had thrown all decorum to the winds in their improvised dialogue. A young colonel, by no means strait-

laced or a hypocrite, who was a great favourite with the Emperor and Empress, professed himself shocked, in the hearing of the latter, at so much licence in the presence of the sovereigns. In reality, it was an honest but indirect comment upon the Empress's blamable latitude in that respect. The Empress took up the cudgels for the offenders. "Vous n'êtes pas content, colonel; hé bien! je m'en *fiche, refiche et contrefiche*." ("You don't like it, colonel; well, I don't care a snap, nor two snaps, nor a thousand snaps."*) The Emperor laughed, and applauded his Consort; the colonel took the hint, and was seen at court no more. Shortly afterwards he went to Mexico, where all who saw him at work concurred in saying that he was not only a most valuable soldier, but probably the only one in the French army, of those days, capable of handling large masses. Nevertheless, when the war of '70 broke out, he was still a colonel, and no attempt at offering him a command was made. The republicans, for once in a way, were wiser in their generation: at this hour he holds a high position in the army, and is destined to occupy a still higher. It was he who counselled Bazaine, in the beginning of the investment of Metz, to leave twenty or thirty thousand men behind to defend the fortress, and to break through with the rest. According to the best authorities of the German general staff, the advice, had it been followed, would have materially altered the state of affairs. It is not my intention to enlarge upon that soldier's career or capabilities; I have

* My translation by no means renders the vulgarity of the sentence. The French have three words to express their contempt for a speaker's opinion, *se moquer*, *se ficher*, and *se . . .* I omit the latter, but even the second is rarely used in decent society.—EDITOR.

merely mentioned them to show that, when her resentment was roused, Eugénie threw all considerations for the welfare of France to the winds, and systematically ostracized men, whatever their merits; for I may add that the young colonel, at the time of the scene described above, was known to be one of the ablest of strategists.

We have heard a great deal of the Empress's charity. Truth to tell, that charity was often as indiscriminate as her anger; it was sporadic, largely admixed with the histrionic element, not unfrequently prompted by sentimentalism rather than by sentiment; and woe to him or to her who ventured to hint that it, the charity, was misplaced. In those days there was a prefect of police, M. Boitelle. He was a worthy man, endowed with a great deal of common sense, and, above all, honest to a degree. Belonging to the middle classes, he was free from the vulgar greed that so often distinguishes them in France; and, after leaving the army as a non-commissioned officer, had settled on a small farm left to him by his parents. Now, it so happened that M. de Persigny, whose real name was Fialin, had been a sergeant in the same regiment, and, one day, after the advent of the Empire, being in the north, went to pay his former comrade a visit. I am perfectly certain that M. Boitelle, whom I knew, and with whose son I have continued the amicable relations subsisting between his father and myself, did not solicit any honours or appointment from the then powerful friend of the Emperor; nevertheless, Persigny appointed his fellow-messmate to the sub-prefectorship of St. Quentin. The emoluments, even in those days, were not large, but M. Boitelle was only a small farmer, and the

promise of quick preferment may have induced him to leave his peaceful homestead ; in short, M. Boitelle accepted, and, after several promotions, found himself at last at the Paris Prefecture of Police. In this instance the choice was really a good one. I have known a good many prefects of police, among others M. de Maupas, who officiated on the night of the Coup d'Etat, and who was also a personal friend ; but I never knew one so thoroughly fitted for the arduous post as M. Boitelle. Though not a man of vast reading or brilliant education, he was essentially a man of the world in the best sense of the word. He was not a martinet, but a capable disciplinarian, and, what was better still, endowed with a feeling of great tolerance for the foibles of modern society. The soldier and the philosopher were so inextricably mixed up in him, that it would have been difficult to say where the one ended and the other began. M. de Maupas was at times too conscious of his own importance ; there was too much of the French official in him. His successful co-operation in the Coup d'Etat had imbued him with an exaggerated notion of his own capabilities of "taking people by the scruff of the neck and running them in" (*à empoigner les gens*). An English friend of mine, to whom I introduced him, summed him up, perhaps, more fitly. "He is like the policeman who ran in a woman of sixty all by himself, and boasted that he could have done it if she had been eighty."

But M. Boitelle, though kind-hearted, had no sympathy whatsoever with mawkish philanthropy. The Empress, on the other hand, had absolute paroxysms of it. She was like the Spanish high-born dame who insisted upon a tombstone for the grave of a bull, the

killing and torturing of which in the ring she had frantically applauded. One day she expressed her wish to M. Boitelle to pay a visit to Saint-Lazare. There is nothing analogous to that institution in England. The "unfortunate woman" who prowls about the streets before or after nightfall is—except in a few garrison towns—tacitly ignored by our legislators, and when she offends against the common law, treated by our magistrates like any other member of society. We have no establishments where the moral cancer eats deeper into the flesh and the mind by the very attempt to isolate those who suffer most from it; we have no system which virtually bars the way to a reformed life by having given official authority to sin, and by recording for evermore the names of those whom want alone compelled to have themselves inscribed as outcasts on those hellish registers. We have no Saint-Lazare, and Heaven be praised for it!

M. Boitelle knew the moral and mental state of most of the inmates of Saint-Lazare sufficiently well to foster no illusions with regard to the benefit to be derived by them from the solitary visit of so exalted a personage, while, on the other hand, he felt perfectly aware that it was morbid curiosity, however well disguised, that prompted the step. At the same time, the respect due to his sovereign made him reluctant to expose her, needlessly, to a possible, if not to a probable insult; in short, he considered the projected "tour of inspection" an ill-concerted one. He also knew that it would be idle to bring his fund of shrewd philosophy to bear upon the Empress, to make her relinquish her design, so he adopted instead the outspoken method of the soldier. "Whatever your

charitable feelings may be for those who suffer, madame," he said, "your place is not among them." The words sound a shade more abrupt in French, but a moment's reflection would have shown the most fastidious lady that no offence on the speaker's part was intended. The Empress, however, drew herself up to her full height. "Charity can go any and everywhere, monsieur," she replied. "You will please take me to Saint-Lazare to-morrow."

I would fain say as little as possible about the occupants of that gloomy building at the top of the Faubourg St. Denis, but am compelled to state in common fairness that, when once they are incarcerated and behave themselves—of course, according to *their* lights—they are not treated with unnecessary harshness. I will go further, and say that they are treated more leniently than female prisoners in other penal establishments. The milder method is due to the presence in greater numbers than elsewhere of that admirable angel of patience, the Sister of Charity, who has no private grievances to avenge upon her own sex, who does not look upon the fallen woman as an erstwhile and unsuccessful rival for the favours of men, who consequently does not apply the *vis victis*, either by sign, deed, or word. During my long stay in Paris, I have been allowed to visit Saint-Lazare twice, and I can honestly say that, though the laws that relegate these women there are a disgrace to nineteenth-century civilization, their application inside Saint-Lazare is not at all brutal. This does not imply that they lie upon down beds, and that their food is of the most delicate description; but they are well cared for, bodily. The Empress, however, in a gush of misplaced

charity, thought fit to take objection to their daily meals not being concluded with dessert. Thereupon, M. Boitelle, whose sound common sense had already been severely tried during that morning, could not help smiling. "Really, madame," he said; "you allow your kindness to run away with your good sense. If they are to have a dessert, what are we to give to honest women?"

Next day, M. Boitelle was appointed a senator; that is, removed from his post as prefect of police, which he had so worthily filled, and where he had done a great deal of unostentatious good. The next time M. Boitelle came in contact with the Empress was at the last hour of the Empire, when he tried, but in vain, to overcome her resentment, caused by his unhappy speech of many years before.

Yet, the woman who could indulge in sentiment about the absence of dessert in the Saint-Lazare refectory, would, at the end of the hunt, deliberately jump off her horse, plunge the gleaming knife in the throat of the panting stag, and revel in the sight of blood. Many who saw her do this argued that in the hour of danger she would as boldly face the enemies of herself and her dynasty. I need not say that they were utterly mistaken. She slunk away at the supreme hour; while the princess, whom she had presumed to teach the manners of a court, left like a princess in an open landau, preceded by an outrider. I am alluding to Princess Clotilde.

CHAPTER VI.

The story of a celebrated sculptor and his model—David d'Angers at the funeral of Cortot, the sculptor—How I became acquainted with him—The sculptor leaves the funeral procession to speak to a woman—He tells me the story—David d'Angers' sympathy with Greece in her struggle for independence—When Botzaris falls at Missolonghi, he makes up his mind to carve his monument—Wishes to do something original—He finds his idea in the cemetery of Père-la-Chaise—In search of a model—Comes unexpectedly upon her in the Rue du Montparnasse, while in company of Victor Hugo—The model and her mother—The bronze Christ on the studio wall—David gives it to his model—The latter dismissed—A plot against the sculptor's life—His model saves him—He tries to find her and fails—Only meets with her when walking behind the hearse of Cortot—She appears utterly destitute—Loses sight of her again—Meets her on the outer boulevards with a nondescript of the worst character—He endeavours to rescue her, but fails—Canler, of the Paris police, reveals the tactics pursued with regard to "unfortunates"—David's exile and death—The Botzaris Monument is brought back to Paris to be restored—The model at the door of the exhibition—Her death.

IN connection with the treatment of "fallen women" in Paris, I may give the following story, which becomes interesting in virtue of the personality of one of the actors. In 1843 the sculptor Cortot died, and I followed his funeral on foot, as was the custom in those days. I walked by the side of one of the greatest artists France, or, for that matter, the world, has ever produced—David d'Angers. The name of his native town was adopted to distinguish him from his celebrated namesake, the painter. I had become acquainted with the great sculptor a twelvemonth

previously, in Delacroix's studio. All at once, as the procession went along the Quai Malaquais, I saw him start violently, and break through what, for want of a more appropriate term, I must call the ranks of mourners. For a moment only; the next, he was back by my side: but I noticed that he was frightfully agitated. He probably saw my concern for him in my face, for, though I asked him no questions, he said of his own accord, "It is all right. I just caught sight of a woman who saved my life, and, by the looks of her, she is in great straits, but, by the time I got out of the crowd, she had disappeared. I have an idea of the errand she was bent upon, and will inquire to-morrow, but I am afraid it will be of very little use."

I kept silent for a moment or two, but my curiosity was aroused, for, I repeat, at that time, the artistic world was ringing with the name of David d'Angers.

"I did not know you had been in such great danger," I said at last.

"Very few people do know it," he replied sadly; "besides, it happened a good many years ago, when you were very young. The next time we meet I will tell you all about it."

A week or so afterwards, as I was leaving the Café de Paris one evening, and going to the tobacconist at the corner of the Rue Laffite, I ran against the celebrated sculptor. The weather was mild, and we sat outside Tortoni's, where he told me the story, part of which I give in his own words, as far as I can remember them after the lapse of more than forty years.

"If there were any need," he began, "to apologize to an Englishman for my sympathy with the Philhellenism which shortened the life of Byron, I might

say that I sucked the principle of the independence of nations with the mother's milk, for I was born in 1789. Be that as it may, when Marcos Botzaris fell at Missolonghi I felt determined that he should have a monument worthy of his heroism and patriotism, as far as my talents could contribute to it. I was sufficiently young to be enthusiastic, and, at the same time, sufficiently presumptuous to imagine that I could do something which had never been done before. You have seen the engraving of the monument; you may judge for yourself how far I succeeded. But the idea of the composition, however out of the common, was, I am bound to admit, not the offspring of my own imagination. I was, perhaps, clever enough to see the poesy of it when presented to me, and to appropriate it; but the young, fragile girl lying on the tombstone and tracing the name of Marcos Botzaris was suggested to me by a scene I witnessed one day at Père-la-Chaise. I saw a child stooping over a gravestone, and trying to spell out the words carved on it. It was all I wanted. I own, from that moment, my composition took shape in my mind. I was, however, still at a loss where to find the ideal child. The little girl of whom I had caught a glimpse would not have done at all for my purpose, even if her parents would have consented to let her sit, which was not at all likely—she was the prosperous-looking demoiselle of a probably prosperous bourgeoisie family, well-fed, plump, and not above seven or eight. I, on the contrary, wanted a girl double that age just budding into womanhood, but with the travail of the transition expressed in every feature, in every limb. She was to represent to the most casual observer the sufferings engendered by the struggle

against tutelage for freedom. She was to bend over the tomb of Botzaris to drag the secret of that freedom from him. Dawning life was to drag the secret from the dead.

"That was my idea, and for several days I cudgelled my brain to find among my models one that would, physically and morally, represent all this. In vain; the grisettes of the Rue Fleurus and the Quartier-Latin, in spite of all that has been said of them by the poets and novelists of that time, were not at all the visible incarnations of lofty sentiment; whatever pain and grief an unrequited romantic passion might entail, they left no appreciable traces on their complexions or in their outline; they were saucy madams, and looked it. I had communicated my wants to some of my friends, and one of them sent me what he thought would suit. The face was certainly a very beautiful one, as an absolutely perfect ensemble of classical features I have never seen the like; but there was about as much expression in it as in my hand, and, as for the body, it was simply bursting out of its dress. I told her she would not do, and the reason why. 'Monsieur can't expect me to go into a consumption for two francs fifty an hour,' she remarked, bouncing out of the room.

"I was fast becoming a nuisance to all my cronies, when, one day, going to dine with Victor Hugo at La Mère Saget's, which was at the Barrière du Maine, I came unexpectedly, in the Rue du Montparnasse, upon the very girl for which I had been looking out for months. Notwithstanding her rags, she was simply charming. She was not above fourteen or fifteen, and, although very tall for her age, she had scarcely any flesh on her bones. I only knew her Christian name—

Clémentine : I doubt whether she had any other. Next morning she came with her mother, an old hag, dissipation and drunkenness written in every line of her face. But the child herself was perfectly innocent—at any rate, as innocent as she could be with such a parent, and tractable to a degree. After a little while the old woman, tired of twirling her thumbs, disgusted, perhaps, at my want of hospitality in not offering her refreshments, left off accompanying her ; Clémentine came henceforth alone.

“My studio was in the Rue de Fleurus in those days, and on the wall hung a very handsome bronze Christ on a velvet panel and in a dark satin frame. Curiously enough, I often caught the mother watching it ; it seemed to have an irresistible fascination for her : and, one day, while the child was dressing, after two or three hours of hard work, she suddenly exclaimed, ‘That’s why my mother will not come here ; she says she’d commit a robbery. She never leaves off talking about it. I wonder whether you’d like to part with it, M. David ? A Christ like that would be beautiful in our attic. It would comfort and cheer me. If you like, I’ll buy it of you. Of course, I have no money, but you can deduct it from my sittings. You can have as many as you like, not only for this statue, but for any other you may want later on.’

“We democrats, professed republicans, and more than suspected revolutionaries, are not credited by the majority with a great reverence for religious dogma ; we are generally branded as absolute freethinkers, not to say atheists. This is frequently a mistake.* I

* It is a mistake. Not to mention Camille Desmoulins, who, when asked his age by his judge, replied, “The age of another *sans-culotte*,

have no occasion to recite my *credo* to you, but a great many of the republicans of '89 and of to-day were and are believers. At any rate, I fondly imagined that the Christ for which the mother and child were longing might exercise some salutary influence on their lives, so I simply took down the frame and its contents and handed them to her. She staggered under the weight. 'You want that Christ,' I said; 'here it is: and when you are tempted to do evil look at it, and think of me, who gave it you as a present.'

"'As a present?' she shrieked for joy; and hurried away as fast as her legs would carry her.

"In about six months from that day the statue was finished. I had no further need of Clémentine's services, and gradually all thought of her slipped from my mind. You may have heard that, some time after my work was despatched to Greece, I was assaulted one night in the Rue Childebert, on my way to Gérard de Nerval's. My skull was split open in two places, I was left for dead in the street, and but for a workman who stumbled over me, took me home, and sat up with me until morning, I might not have lived to tell the tale. From the very first I suspected the identity of my assailant, though I have never breathed his name to any one. I am glad to say I never had many enemies, nor have I now, as far as I am aware; but I had offended the man by withholding my vote in a prize competition. He was, however, not responsible for his actions; for even at that time he must have been mad. A few years afterwards, the suspicion both of his mad-

Jesus," Esquiros frequently spoke of "that good patriot, Christ;" Lammenais began the draft of his constitution with, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and by the will of the French people."—EDITOR.

ness and his attempt upon my life became a certainty, for he repeated the latter. You are very young, and youth is either very credulous or very sceptical. We should be neither. If what I am going to tell you now were to be represented to you at the Ambigu or Porte Saint-Martin, you, as an educated man, would shrug your shoulders, and look with a kind of good-natured contempt upon the grisette or workman or bourgeois who would sit spellbound and take it all in as so much gospel. Providence, fate, call it what you will, concocts more striking dramatic situations and a greater number of them than M. Scribe and all his compeers have constructed in the course of their professional careers. Listen, and you shall judge for yourself.

"About seven years after the attack in the Rue Childebert, I received a letter one morning, inviting me to attend a meeting that same night between twelve and one, at a house in the Faubourg Saint-Jacques, near the hospital of the Val-de-Grace. The letter told me how to proceed. There being no concierge in the house, I was to provide myself with a 'dark lantern,' and to go up four flights of stairs, where I should find a door with a cross chalked upon it. It would be opened by my giving a particular knock. My previous danger notwithstanding, I had not the least suspicion of this being a trap. I did not for one moment connect the letter with the other event, the recollection of which, strange as it may seem to you, did not obtrude itself at all then. But there was another reason for the absence of caution on my part. In one of its corners the letter bore a sign, not exactly that of a secret society, but agreed upon among certain patriots.

"In short, a little before twelve o'clock that night, I went to the place appointed. I had no difficulty in finding the house, and reached the fourth story without meeting a soul. There was the door with the cross chalked on it. I knocked once, twice, without receiving an answer. Still, the thought of evil never entered my head. I began to think that I had been the victim of a hoax of some youngsters of the *École des Beaux-Arts*, most of whom were aware of my political opinions. I was just turning round to go down again, when a door by the side of that indicated was slowly opened, and a young girl with a lighted candle appeared on the threshold. Though both the candle and my lantern did not shed much light, I perceived that, at the sight of me, she turned very pale, but, until she spoke, I failed to recognize her. Then I saw it was Clémentine, my model. She scarcely gave me time to speak. 'It is you, M. David,' she said, in a voice trembling with fear and emotion. 'You,' she repeated. 'For Heaven's sake, go—go as quickly as you can! If you stay another moment, you will be a corpse; for God's sake, go! And let me beg of you not to breathe a word of this to any one; if you do, my mother and I will pay for this with our lives. For God's sake, go. I did not know that you were the person expected. Go—go!'

"I do not think I answered a single word. I felt instinctively that this was no hoax, as I had imagined, but terrible reality. I went downstairs as fast as I could, but it was not until I got into the street that a connection between the two events presented itself to me. Then I decided to wait and watch. I hid myself in the doorway of a house a few steps away. Scarcely

ten minutes had elapsed when half a dozen individuals arrived, one by one, and disappeared into the house that sheltered Clémentine and her mother. One of them, I feel sure, was the man whom I suspected of having attempted my life before. A few years more went by, during which I often thought of my former model; and then, one day, I felt I would like to see her again. In plain daylight this time, I repaired to the house of the Faubourg Saint-Jacques, clambered up the stairs, and knocked at the door I had such good cause to remember. The door was opened by a workman, and a rapid glance at the inside of the room showed me that he was a lastmaker. 'Mademoiselle Clémentine?' I asked. The man stared at me, and said, 'No such person lives here.' I made inquiries on all the lower floors—nobody had ever heard of her. Clémentine had disappeared. I never saw her again until a few days ago, when I walked by your side behind the body of Cortot. I should not have recognized her but for the bronze Christ she carried under her arm, and which attracted my notice. If what I surmise be correct, she must have reached the last stage of misery; for I feel convinced that nothing but absolute want would make her part with it. I have, however, failed to trace it in any of the bric-à-brac shops on the quays, and I believe that I have pretty well inquired at every one; so I must fain be content until fate throws her again across my path."

So far the story as told by the great sculptor himself. During the next eight years, in fact up to the Coup d'Etat, I met him frequently, and, curiously enough, rarely failed to inquire whether in his many wanderings through Paris he had caught a glimpse

of his former model. I felt unaccountably interested in the fate of that woman whom I had never seen, and, if we had been able to find her, would have endeavoured to find a decent home for her. But for about three years my inquiries always met with the same answer. Then, one evening in the latter end of '46 or beginning of '47, David told me that he had met her on the outer boulevards, arm in arm with one of those terrible nondescripts of which one is often compelled to speak again and again, and which, as far as I am aware, are nowhere to be found as a class except in the French metropolis and great provincial centres. Clémentine evidently wished to avoid David. A little while after, he met her again, and this time followed her, but, though by no means a coward, lacked the courage to enter the hovel into which she had disappeared with her companion. The last time he saw her was in the middle of '47, in the Rue des Boucheries. She seemed to have returned to her old quarters, and she was by herself. Until she spoke, David did not recognize her. Her face was positively seamed with horrible scars, "wounds inflicted by her lovers"—Heaven save the mark! She asked him to help her, and he did; but she had scarcely gone a few steps when she was arrested and taken to the prison of l'Abbaye de St. Germain, hard by, whither David followed to intercede for her. He was told to come back next morning, and that same evening communicated the affair to me. I decided there and then to accompany him, in order to carry out my plan of redeeming that human soul if possible. I failed, though through no fault of my own, but my attempt brought me in contact with a personage scarcely less interesting

in his own way than David, namely, M. Canler, the future head of the Paris detective force. It was through him that I got an insight into some of the most revolting features of criminal life in Paris. But, before dealing with that subject, I wish to devote a few more lines to David, whom I had the honour of numbering among my friends till the day of his death, albeit that the last few years of his life were spent away from France, whither he returned, however, to die in '56. After the Coup d'Etat he was exiled by Louis-Napoléon—ostensibly, for his political opinions; in reality, because he had refused to finish the monument for Queen Hortense's tomb after her son's fiasco at Boulogne.

Writing about France and Frenchmen, I feel somewhat reluctant to make too lavish a use of the words "patriot" and "patriotism," especially with the patriots and the patriotism of the Third Republic around me. But I have no hesitation in saying that, to David d'Angers, these words meant something almost sacred. Sprung from exceedingly poor parents, he had amassed, by honest work, a fortune which, to men born in a higher sphere and with far more expensive tastes, might seem sufficient. Seeing that he was frugality and simplicity personified, that his income was mainly spent in alleviating distress, and that his daughter was even more simple-minded than her father, he had nothing to gain by the advent of a republic, nothing to lose by the establishment of a monarchy or empire, and his ardent championship of republican institutions—such as he conceived them—was prompted solely by his noble nature. That Louis-Napoléon should have exiled such a man was an error his warmest friends

could scarcely forgive him. But David never complained, any more than he ever uttered a harsh word against the memory of Flaxman, who, in his youth, had shut his doors against him under the impression that he was a relation of Louis David who had voted for the death of Louis XVI. On the contrary, the memory of the great English sculptor was held in deep reverence.

And so David departed, a wanderer on the face of the earth with his daughter. He first endeavoured to settle in Brussels, but the irresistible desire to behold once more what he himself considered his greatest work, the monument to Marcos Botzaris, attracted him to Greece. A friend, to whom he communicated his intention, wrote to him, "Do not go." He gave him no further reason; he even withheld from him the fact that he had been at Missolonghi a twelvemonth previously. The explanation of this reticence may be gathered from David's letter to him a few days after his, David's, return. I have been allowed to copy it, and give it verbatim.

"Long before our vessel anchored near the spot where Byron died, I caught a glimpse of the tumulus erected at the foot of the bastion, in honour of Botzaris and his fellow-heroes. It made a small dark spot on the horizon, and above it was a speck, much smaller and perfectly white. I knew instinctively that this was my statue of the 'young Greek girl,' and I watched and watched with bated breath, fancying as the ship sped along that the speck moved. Of course, it was only my imagination, the presumptuous thought that the marble effigy would start into life at the approach of its creator.

"Alas, would I had proceeded no further—that I had been satisfied with the mirage instead of pushing on in hot haste towards the reality! For the reality was heart-rending, so heart-rending that I wept like a child, and clenched my fists like a giant in despair. The right hand of the statue, the index finger of which pointed to the name, had been broken; the ears had disappeared, one of the feet was broken to atoms, and the face slashed with knives. It was like the face of the girl that had sat for me, when I last saw it, under the circumstances which, you may remember, I told you. The whole was riddled with bullets, and some tourists, British ones probably, had cut their names on the back of the child. And so ends the most glorious chapter of my artist's career—the model itself fallen beyond redemption, the work mutilated beyond repair, the author of it in exile.

"I felt powerless to repair the mischief. I did not stay long. Perhaps I ought not to complain. I knew that Byron had been buried near the fortifications at Missolonghi, but all my efforts to find the spot have proved useless.* The house where he breathed his last had been pulled down. Why should the Greeks have more reverence for Botzaris or Mavrocordato than they had for the poet? and if these three are so little to them, what must I be, whose name they probably never heard? Still, as I stood at the stern of the departing vessel, I felt heart-broken. I have no illusions left."

I firmly believe that the injury done to the statue hastened David's death. His work has since been

* Of course David meant the spot where the remains had been interred at first.—EDITOR.

restored by M. Armand Toussaint, his favourite pupil, who gave his promise to that effect a few days before the great sculptor breathed his last. The monument was, however, not brought to Paris until 1861, and when M. Toussaint had finished his task, he invited the press and the friends of his famous master to judge of the results. It was at the door of his studio that I saw the woman, whose adventures I have told in the preceding notes, for the first time. A fortnight later, she died at the hospital of La Charité, at peace, I trust, with her Maker. "Fate, Providence, call it what you will," as David himself would have said, had brought me to the spot just in time to alleviate the last sufferings of one who, though not altogether irresponsible for her own errors, was to a still greater extent the victim of a system so iniquitous as to make the least serious-minded—provided he be endowed with the faintest spark of humanity—shudder. I allude to the system pursued by the Paris detective force in their hunt after criminals—a system not altogether abandoned yet, and the successful carrying out of which is paid for by the excruciating tortures inflicted upon defenceless though fallen women—but women still—by the *souteneur*. I refrain from Anglicizing the word; it will suggest itself after the perusal of the following facts, albeit that, fortunately with us, the creature itself does not exist as a class, and, what is worse, as a class recognized by those whose first and foremost duty it should be to destroy him root and branch.

* * * * *

The morning after Clémentine's arrest, David and
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I repaired to the prison of l'Abbaye Saint-Germain. When the sculptor sent in his name, the governor himself came out to receive us. But the woman was gone; she had been transferred, the previous night, to the dépôt of the préfecture de police, "where," he said, "if you make haste, you will still find her." He gave us a letter of introduction for the official charged to deal with refractory "*filles soumises*," or offending *insoumises*, because, then as now, these unfortunates were not tried by an ordinary police magistrate in open court, but summarily punished by said official, the sentences being subject, however, to revision or confirmation by his superior, the chief of the municipal police. Nay, the decisions were not even communicated to these women until they were safely lodged in Saint-Lazare, lest there should be a disturbance; for they were not examined one by one; and, as may be imagined, the contagion of revolt spread easily among those hysterical and benighted creatures.

When we reached the préfecture de police the judging was over, but, on our sending in our letter, we were admitted at once to the official's room. After David's description, he remembered the woman, and told us at once that she had not been sent to Saint-Lazare, but liberated. Some one had interceded for her—no less a personage than Canler, who, though at the time but a superintendent, was already fast springing into notice as a detective of no mean skill. "What had he done with her?" was David's question. "I could not tell you," was the courteous reply; "but I will give you his address, and he will no doubt give you all the information in his power and consistent with his duty." With this we were bowed out of the room.

We did not succeed in seeing Canler until two days afterwards, or, rather, on the evening of the second day; for, at that period, he was entrusted with the surveillance of the theatres on the Boulevard du Temple. I may have occasion to speak of him again, so I need not give his portrait here. He was about fifty, and, unlike one of his successors, M. Claude, the type of the old soldier. Of his honesty there never was, there could have never been, a doubt, nor was his intelligence ever questioned. And yet, this very honest, intelligent man, in his all-absorbing pursuit, the detection and chasing of criminals, was sufficiently dishonest and unintelligent to foster, if not to inaugurate, a system subversive of all morality.

David's name was a passport everywhere, and, no sooner had it been sent in, than Canler came out to him. The sculptor stated his business, and the police officer made a wry face. "I am afraid, M. David, I cannot help you in this instance. To speak plainly, I have restored her to her *souteneur*." We both opened our eyes very wide. "Yes," came the remark, "I know what you are going to say. I can sum up all your objections before you utter them. But I could not help myself; the fellow rendered me a service, and this was the price of it. Without his aid, one of the most desperate burglars in Paris would still be at large. As it is, I have got him safe under lock and key. Very shocking, no doubt; mais, à la guerre comme à la guerre." Then, seeing that we did not answer, he continued: "As a rule, I do not explain my tactics to everybody; but you, M. David, are not everybody, and, if you like to meet me when the theatre is over, I shall be pleased to have a chat with you."

At half-past twelve that night we were seated at a restaurant near the Porte Saint-Martin, and, after a few preliminary remarks, Canler explained.

"However great an artist you may be, M. David, you could not produce a statue without the outlay for the marble, or for the casting of it in bronze. You, moreover, want to pay your *praticien*, who does the rough work for you. Our *praticiens* are the informers, and they want to be paid like the most honest workmen. The detection of crime means, no doubt, intelligence, but it means also money. Now, money is the very thing I have not got, and yet, when I accepted the functions I am at present fulfilling, I gave my promise to M. Delessert not to neglect the detective part of the business. I wish to keep my word, first of all, because I pledged it; secondly, because detection of crime is food and drink to me; thirdly, because I hope to be the head of the Paris detective force one day. The Government allows a ridiculously small sum every year for distribution among informers, and rewards among their own agents; it is something over thirty thousand francs, but not a sou of which ever reached my hands when I accepted my present appointment, and scarcely a sou of which reaches me now. I was, therefore, obliged to look out for auxiliaries, sufficiently disinterested to assist me gratuitously, but, knowing that absolute disinterestedness is very rare indeed, I looked for my collaborateurs among the very ones I was charged to watch, but who, in exchange for my protection in the event of their offending, were ready to peach upon their companions in crime and in vice. I need not trouble you by enumerating the various categories of my allies, but

the souteneur, the most abject of them all, is, perhaps, the most valuable.

"He is too lazy to work, and, as a rule, has not got the pluck of a mouse, consequently he rarely resorts to crime, requiring the smallest amount of energy or daring. He furthermore loves his Paris, where, according to his own lights, he enjoys himself and lives upon the fat of the land; all these reasons make him careful not to commit himself, albeit that at every minute of the day he comes in contact with everything that is vile. But he gets hold of their secrets, though the word is almost a misnomer, seeing that few of these desperadoes can hold their tongue about their own business, knowing all the while, as they must do, that their want of reticence virtually puts their heads into the halter. But if they have done 'a good stroke of business,' even if they do not brag about it in so many words, they must show their success by their sudden show of finery, by their treating of everybody all round, etc. The souteneur is, as it were, jealous of all this; for though he lives in comparative comfort from what his mistress gives him, he rarely makes a big haul. His mistress gone, the pot ceases to boil; in fact, he calls her his *marmite*. In a few days he is on his beams' ends, unless he has one in every different quarter, which is not often the case, though it happens now and then. But, at any rate, the incarceration of one of them makes a difference, and, under the circumstance, he repairs, as far as he dares, to the préfecture, and obtains her liberation in exchange for the address of a burglar or even a murderer who is wanted. I have known one who had perfected his system of obtaining information to such a degree as to be able

to sell his secrets to his fellow-souteneurs when they had none of their own wherewith to propitiate the detectives. He has had as much as three or four hundred francs for one revelation of that kind, which means twenty or thirty times the sum the police would have awarded him. Of course, three or four hundred francs is a big sum for the souteneur to shell out; but, when the marmite is a good one, he sooner does that than be deprived of his revenues for six months or so. I have diverted some of those secrets into my own channel, and Clémentine's souteneur is one of my clients: that is why I gave her up. Very shocking, gentlemen, but *à la guerre comme à la guerre*."

M. Canler furthermore counselled us to leave Clémentine alone. He positively refused to give us any information as to her whereabouts: that is why I did not meet with her until five years after David's death, too late to be of any use to her in this world.

CHAPTER VII.

Queen Victoria in Paris—The beginning of the era of middle-class excursions—English visitors before that—The British tourist of 1855—The real revenge of Waterloo—The Englishman's French and the Frenchman's English—The opening of the Exhibition—The lord mayor and aldermen in Paris—The King of Portugal—All these considered so much "small fry"—Napoleon III. goes to Boulogne to welcome the Queen—The royal yacht is delayed—The French hotel-proprietor the greatest artist in fleecing—The Italian, the Swiss, the German, mere bunglers in comparison—Napoleon III. before the arrival of the Queen—Pondering the past—Arrival of the Queen—The Queen lands, followed by Prince Albert and the royal children—The Emperor rides by the side of her carriage—Comments of the population—An old salt on the situation—An old soldier's retort—The general feeling—Arrival in Paris—The Parisians' reception of the Queen—A description of the route—The apartments of the Queen at St. Cloud—How the Queen spent Sunday—Visits the art section of the exhibition on Monday—Ingres and Horace Vernet presented to her—Frenchmen's ignorance of English art in those days—English and French art critics—The Queen takes a carriage drive through Paris—Not a single cry of "Vive l'Angleterre!" a great many of "Vive la Reine!"—England making a catspaw of France—Reception at the Elysée-Bourbon—"Les Demoiselles de Saint-Cyr" at St. Cloud—Alexandre Dumas would have liked to see the Queen—Visit to Versailles—State-performances at the Opera—Ball at the Hôtel de Ville—The Queen's dancing—Canrobert on "the Queen's dancing and her soldiers' fighting"—Another visit to the Exhibition—Béranger misses seeing the Queen—"I am not going to see the Queen, but the woman"—A review in the Champ-de-Mars—A visit to Napoleon's tomb—Jérôme's absence on the plea of illness—Marshal Vaillant's reply to the Emperor when the latter invites him to take Jérôme's place—His comments on the receptions given by the Emperor to foreign sovereigns—Fêtes at Versailles—Homeward.

MAGNIFICENT as were the quasi-private entertainments at Compiègne, and the more public ones at the Tuileries, they were as nothing to the series of fêtes on the occasion of Queen Victoria's visit to Paris, in 1855.

For nearly three months before, the capital had assumed the aspect of a fair. The Exposition Universelle of '55 virtually inaugurated the era of "middle-class excursions," which since then have assumed such colossal proportions, especially with regard to the English. Previous to this the development of railways had naturally brought many of our countrymen to Paris, but they were of a different class from those who now invaded the French metropolis. They were either men of business bent on business, though not averse to enjoying themselves in the intervals, or else belonging or pretending to belong to "the upper ten," and travelling more or less *en grand seigneurs*. They came singly, and left their cards at the Embassy, etc. The new visitors came in groups, though not necessarily acquainted or travelling with one another; they knew nothing of the Hôtel Meurice and the Hôtel Bristol or their traditions; they crowded the Palais-Royal and its cheap restaurants, and had, so to speak, no French at their command. Notwithstanding the exclamation of the Frenchman when he saw the statue of Wellington opposite Apsley House, it was then, and then only, that the *revanche* of Waterloo began. It has lasted ever since. It was '55 that marked the appearance in the shop-windows of small cards bearing the words, "English spoken here." Hitherto the English visitor to Paris was commonly supposed to have had a French tutor or governess, and though the French he or she did speak was somewhat trying to the ear, it was heavenly music compared to the English the Parisian shopkeeper now held it incumbent upon himself to "trot out" for the benefit of his customers, or that of the guide or valet de place, legions of whom infested the streets.

The Exhibition was opened on the 15th of May, but Queen Victoria was not expected until the middle of August. Meanwhile, the Parisians were treated to a sight of the Lord Mayor—Sir F. Moon, I believe—and the aldermen, who came in the beginning of June, and who were magnificently entertained by the Paris municipality, a deputation of which went as far as Boulogne to welcome them. Still, it was very evident that neither their visit nor that of the King of Portugal and his brother was to tax the ingenuity of upholsterers, carpenters, and caterers, or of the Parisians themselves in the matter of decoration; the watchword had apparently been given from the highest quarters to reserve their greatest efforts for what Napoleon up till then considered "the most glorious event of his reign." The Emperor, though he had gone to join the Empress, who was by this time known to be enceinte, at Eaux-Bonnes and Biarritz, returned to Paris at the end of July, and for more than a fortnight occupied himself personally and incessantly with the smallest details of the Queen's visit, the whole of the programme of which was settled by him.

I was one of the few privileged persons who travelled down to Boulogne with Louis-Napoléon, on Friday, the 17th of August, 1855. When we got to our destination, the yacht was not in sight, but we were already informed that, owing to its heavy tonnage, it would not be able to enter the harbour except at high tide, which would not be until 1 p.m., on Saturday. Shortly after that hour the vessel, accompanied by its flotilla, appeared in the offing; but the Queen remained on board, and we had to enjoy ourselves as best we could, which was not difficult, seeing that the whole



of the town was absolutely in the streets, and that the latter were decidedly preferable to the stuffy attics at the hotels, for which we were charged the moderate sum of forty francs each. - Uneventful as my life has been, it is only worth recording by reason of the celebrity of the persons with whom I have come in contact; nevertheless, I have travelled a good deal, and been present at a great many festive gatherings both in England and on the Continent. Commend me to the French hotel-proprietor for fleecing you in cold blood. The Swiss and the Italians, no mean masters of the art, are not in it with him; and as for the Germans, they are mere 'prentices compared with him. The Italian despoils you, like his countryman of operatic fame, Fra-Diavolo; the Swiss, like an English highwayman of the good old sort; the German, like a beggar who picks your pocket while you are looking in your purse for a coin to give him; the Frenchman, like the money-lender who is "not working for himself, but for a hard-hearted, relentless principal."

On the Saturday, the Emperor was astir betimes, and went to the camp occupied by the troops under the command of Marshal Baraguey-d'Hilliers. Louis-Napoléon's countenance was at all times difficult to read; I repeat, his eyes, like those of others, may have been "the windows of his soul," but their blinds were down most of the time. It was only at rare intervals that the impenetrable features were lighted up by a gleam from within, that the head, which generally inclined to the right, became erect. On that morning, the face was even a greater blank than usual. And yet that day, even to the fatalist he was, must have seemed

a wonderful one; for the blind goddess of fortune, the "lucky star" in which he trusted, had never rewarded a mortal as she had rewarded him. A few years previously, during one of his presidential journeys, he had been hailed with enthusiasm at Strasburg, the city in which the scene of one of his bitterest fiascos had been laid. The contrast between those two days was startling indeed: on the one, he was hurried into a post-chaise as a prisoner to be taken to Paris, with an almost certain terrible fate overhanging him; on the other, he was greeted as the saviour of France, the Imperial Crown was within his grasp. But, startling as was this contrast, it could but have been mild compared to that which must have presented itself to his mind that autumn morning at Boulogne, when, a few hours later, the legions—his legions—took up their positions from Wimereux on the right to Porsel on the left, to do homage to the sovereign of a country which had been the most irreconcilable foe of the founder of his house; on the very heights at the foot of which he himself had failed to rouse the French to enthusiasm; on the very spot where he had become the laughing-stock of the world by his performance with that unfortunate tame eagle.

And yet, I repeat, not a gleam of pride or joy lighted up the Sphinx-like mask. To see this man standing there unmoved amidst the highest honours the world had to bestow, one could not help thinking of Voltaire's condemnation of fatalism as the guiding principle of life: "If perchance fatalism be the true doctrine, I would sooner be without such a cruel truth."

A regiment of lancers and one of dragoons lined the

route from the landing-stage to the railway station, for in those days the trains did not stop alongside the boats; while on the bridge crossing the Liane, three hundred sappers, bearded like the Pard, shouldering their axes, wearing their white leathern aprons, stood in serried ranks, three deep.

The Queen's yacht had been timed to enter the harbour at one, but it was within a minute or so of two before it was moored amidst the salutes from the forts. The Emperor, who had been on horseback the whole of the morning—who, in fact, preferred that means of locomotion on all important occasions, as it showed him off to greater advantage,—had been standing by the side of his charger. He crossed the gangway, beautifully upholstered in purple velvet and carpet to match, at once, and, after having kissed her hand, offered her his arm to assist her in landing, Prince Albert and the royal children coming immediately behind the Imperial host and his principal guest. A magnificent, roomy barouche, capable of holding six persons and lined with white satin, but only drawn by two horses—such horses! for in that respect Napoleon had spent his time to advantage in England,—stood waiting to convey the Royal family. The Emperor himself, though, mounted his horse once more, and took his place by the right of the carriage, the left being taken by Marshal Baraguey-d'Hilliers. The head of the procession started amidst tremendous cheers from the crowd, but we who came on behind heard some curious comments upon this popular manifestation. Knowing that there would be a considerable delay in getting the train off, I walked instead of driving. I was accompanied by Lord —,

who was never averse to having his little joke. "Hé bien, mon ami," he said to an old weather-beaten sailor, who was short of his left leg—"hé bien, mon ami, nous voilà reconciliés."

"Oui, oui, je t'en fiche," was the answer; "mais puisqu'il en sont à se faire des m'amours, ils devaient bien me rendre ma jambe que j'ai perdue dans leurs querelles."

"Imbécile," remarked an old soldier-looking man, who, though old, was evidently younger than the first speaker, and who was short of an arm, "ta jambe ne t'irait pas plus que mon bras; c'était ta jambe de garçon."

"C'est vrai," nodded the other philosophically; "tout de même, c'est drôle que nous nous soyons battus comme des chiens," pointing across the Channel in the direction of England, "pour en arriver à cela. Si le vieux (Napoleon I.) revenait, il serait rudement colère." And I may say at once that, notwithstanding the friendly attitude throughout of the rural as well as of the Parisian populations, that was the underlying sentiment. "Waterloo est arrangé, non pas vengé," said a Parisian; "il paraît qu'il y a des accommodements avec les rois, aussi bien qu'avec le ciel."

As a matter of course, we did not leave Boulogne much before three—the original arrangement had been for half-past one,—and when we reached Paris it was dark, too early for the illuminations which had been projected along the line of boulevards from the recently opened Boulevard de Strasbourg to the Madeleine, not so much as a feature in the programme of reception, as in honour of the Queen

generally. On the other hand, there was not sufficient daylight for the crowds to distinguish the sovereign's features, and a corresponding disappointment was the result. The lighted carriage lamps did not improve matters much. But the Parisians—to their credit be it said—knowing that Queen Victoria had expressed her wish to be conveyed to St. Cloud in an open carriage, instead of the closed State one used on such occasions, took note of the intention, and acknowledged it with ringing cheers. Victor Hugo has said that the Parisian loves to show his teeth—he must either be laughing or growling; and at the best of times it is an ungrateful task to analyse too thoroughly such manifestations of enthusiasm. There are always as many reasons why nations should hate as love each other. The sentiment, as expressed by the sailor and soldier alluded to just now, did exist—of that I feel sure; but amidst the truly fairy spectacle then presented to the masses that crowded the streets, it may have been forgotten for the moment.

For, in spite of the gathering darkness, the scene was almost unique. I have only seen another one like it, namely, when the troops returned from the Franco-Austrian War; and people much older than I declared that the next best one was that on the occasion of the return of the Bourbons in 1814.

Though the new northern station, erected on the site of the old, had been virtually finished for more than a twelvemonth, the approaches to it were, if not altogether magnificent projects, little more than magnificent mazes, stone and mortar Phoenixes, in the act of rising, not risen, from Brobdignagian dust-

heaps, and altogether unfit for any kind of spectacular procession. Consequently, it had been decided to connect the northern with the eastern line immediately after entering the fortifications. The Strasbourg Station did not labour under the same disadvantages; the Boulevard of that name stretched uninterruptedly as far as the Boulevard St. Denis, although, as yet, there were few houses on it. I have seen a good many displays of bunting in my time; I have seen Turin and Florence and Rome beflagged and decorated on the occasions of popular rejoicings; I have seen historical processions in the university towns of Utrecht and Leyden; I have seen triumphal entries in Brussels; I was in London on Thanksgiving day, but I have never beheld anything to compare with the wedged masses of people along the whole of the route, as far as the Bois de Boulogne, on that Saturday afternoon. The whole of the suburban population had, as it were, flocked into Paris. The regulars lined one side of the whole length of the Boulevards, the National Guards the other. And there was not a single house from the station to the southernmost corner of the Rue Royale that had not its emblems, its trophies, its inscriptions of "welcome." With that inborn taste which distinguishes the Parisians, the decorator had ceased trying to gild the gold and to paint the lily at that point, and had left the magnificent perspective to produce its own effect—a few Venetian masts along the Avenue des Champs-Élysées and nothing more. Among the notable features of the decorations in the main artery of Paris was the magnificent triumphal arch, erected by the management of the Opéra between the Rue de Richelieu and what is now

the Rue Drouot. It rose to the fourth stories of the adjacent houses, and looked, not a temporary structure, but a monument intended to stand the wear and tear of ages. No description could convey an idea of its grandeur. The inside was draped throughout with beebespangled purple, the top was decorated with immense eagles, seemingly in full flight, and holding between their talons proportionately large scutcheons, bearing the interlaced monograms of the Imperial hosts and the Royal guests. In front of the Passage de l'Opéra stood an allegorical statue, on a very beautiful pedestal draped with flags; and further on, at the back of the Opéra-Comique, which really should have been its front,* an obelisk, the base of which was a correct representation, in miniature, of the Palais de l'Industrie (the then Exhibition Building). By the Madeleine a battalion of the National Guards had erected, at their own cost, two more allegorical statues, France and England. A deputation from the National Guards had also presented her Majesty with a magnificent bouquet on alighting from the train.

By a very delicate attention, the private apartments of the Queen had, in many ways, been made to look as much as possible like those at Windsor Castle; and where this transformation was found impossible by reason of their style of decoration—such as, for instance, in the former boudoir of Marie-Antoinette,—

* In 1782, when Heurtier, the architect, submitted his plan of the building which was intended for the Italian singing-actors, the latter offered a determined opposition to the idea of the theatre facing the Boulevards, lest they should be confounded with the small theatres on the Boulevard du Temple and in the direction of the present Boulevard des Filles-du-Calvaire. This extraordinary vanity was lampooned on all sides, and especially in a *quatrain*, which I forbear to quote even in French.—EDITOR.

the mural paintings and those of the ceiling had been restored by two renowned artists. In addition to this, the most valuable pictures had been borrowed from the Louvre to enhance the splendour of the reception and dining rooms, while none but crack regiments in full dress were told off for duty.

The day after the Queen's arrival being Sunday, the entertainment after dinner consisted solely of a private concert; on the Monday the Queen visited the Fine Arts' Section of the Exhibition, which was located in a separate building at the top of the Avenue Montaigne, and connected with the main structure by beautifully laid-out gardens. The Queen spent several hours among the modern masterpieces of all nations, and two French artists had the honour of being presented. I will not be certain of the names, because I was not there, but, as far as I can remember, they were Ingres and Horace Vernet.

While on the subject of art, I cannot help digressing for a moment. I may take it that in 1855 a good many Englishmen of the better middle classes, though not exactly amateurs or connoisseurs of pictures, were acquainted with the names, if not with the works, of the French masters of the modern school. Well, in that same year, the English school burst upon the corresponding classes in France like a revelation—nay, I may go further still, and unhesitatingly affirm that not a few critics, and those of the best, shared the astonishment of the non-professional multitude. They had heard of Sir Joshua Reynolds and Gainsborough, perhaps of Turner, but Constable and Moreland, Wilkie and Webster, Mulready, and the rest of the younger school, were simply so many names. But

when the critics did become aware of their existence, their criticisms were simply a delightful series of essays, guiding the most ignorant to a due appreciation of those Englishmen's talents, not stinting praise, but by no means withholding blame, instinctively focussing merits and defects in a few brilliant paragraphs, which detected the painter's intention and conception as well as his execution both from a technical, as well as dramatic, graphic, and pictorial point of view; which showed, not only the influence of general surroundings, but dissected the result of individual tendencies. Many a time since, when wading through the adipose as well as verbose columns dealing with similar subjects in English newspapers, have I longed for the literary fleshpots of France, which contained and contain real nourishing substance, not the fatty degeneration of an ignoramus's brain, and, what is worse, of an ignoramus who speaks in numbers from a less valid reason than Pope's; for the most repellent peculiarity of these effusions are the numbers. It would seem that these would-be critics, having no more than the ordinary auctioneer's intellect, endeavour as much as possible to assimilate their effusions to a catalogue. They are an abomination to the man who can write, though he may know nothing about painting, and to the man who knows about painting and cannot write. The pictorial art of England must indeed be a hardy plant to have survived the approval and the disapproval of these barbarians.

To come back to the Queen, who, after leaving the Palais de l'Industrie, drove to several points of interest in Paris, notably to la Sainte-Chapelle. The route

taken was by the Rue de Rivoli and the Pont-Neuf; the return journey was effected by the Pont-aux-Changes and the eastern end of the same street, which had only been opened recently, as far as the Place de la Bastille. Then, and then only, her Majesty caught sight of the Boulevards in the whole of their extent. The decorations of the previous day but one had not been touched, and the crowds were simply one tightly wedged-in mass of humanity. A journalistic friend had procured me a *permis de circuler*—in other words, “a police pass,”—and I made the way from the Boulevard Beaumarchais to Tortoni on foot. It may be interesting to those who are always prating about the friendship between England and France to know that I heard not a single cry of “Vive l’Angleterre!” On the other hand, I heard a great many of “Vive la Reine!” Even the unthinking crowd, though yielding to the excitement of the moment, seemed to distinguish between the country and her ruler. I am not commenting upon this: I am merely stating a fact. Probably it is not England’s fault that she has not been able to inspire the French nation as a whole with anything like a friendly feeling, but it is as well to point it out. During the whole of the Crimean War, nine out of every ten educated Frenchmen openly asserted that France had been made a cat’s-paw by England, that the alliance was one forced upon the nation by Napoleon from dynastic and personal, rather than from patriotic and national, motives; there were some who, at the moment of the Queen’s visit, had the candour to say that this, and this only, would be France’s reward for the blood and money spent in the struggle. At the same time, it is but fair to state

that these very men spoke both with admiration and respect of England's sovereign.

At three o'clock there was a brilliant reception at the Elysée, when the members of the corps diplomatique accredited to the Tuileries were presented to the Queen. Shortly after five her Majesty returned to Saint-Cloud, where, in the evening, the actors of the Comédie-Française gave, at the Queen's special request, a performance of "*Les Demoiselles de Saint-Cyr*." She had seen the piece in London, and been so pleased with it that she wished to see it again. Though I was on very intimate terms with Dumas, we had not met for several weeks, which was not wonderful, seeing that I was frequently appealed to by the son himself for news of his father. "What has become of him? He might be at the antipodes for all I see of him," said Alexandre II. about a dozen times a year. However, two or three days after the performance at Saint-Cloud, I ran against him in the Chaussée d'Antin. "Well, you ought to be pleased," I said; "it appears that not only has the Queen asked to see your piece, which she had already seen in London, but that she enjoyed it even much better the second than the first time."

"C'est comme son auteur," he replied: "plus on le connaît, plus on l'aime. Je sais pourtant bien ce qui l'aurait amusée même d'avantage que de voir ma pièce, c'eût été de me voir moi-même, et franchement, ça m'aurait amusé aussi."

"Then why did not you ask for an audience? I am certain it would have been granted," I remarked, because I felt convinced that her Majesty would have been only too pleased to confer an honour upon such a man.

"En effet, j'y ai pensé," came the reply; "une femme aussi remarquable et qui deviendra probablement la plus grande femme du siècle aurait du se rencontrer avec le plus grand homme en France, mais j'ai eu peur qu'on ne me traite comme Madame de Staël traitait Saint-Simon. C'est dommage, parcequ'elle s'en ira sans avoir vu ce qu'il y de mieux dans notre pays, Alexandre, Roi du Monde romanesque, Dumas l'ignorant." Then he roared with laughter and went away.*

On Tuesday, the 21st, the Queen went to Versailles to inspect the picture-galleries established there by Louis-Philippe, and, in the evening, she was present at a gala-performance at the Opéra. Next day, she paid a second visit to the Palais de l'Industrie, but to the industrial section only. In the evening, there was a performance of "Le Fils de Famille" ("The Queen's Shilling"). On the 23rd, she spent several hours at the Louvre; after which, at night, she attended the ball given in her honour by the Municipality of Paris. I shall not attempt to describe that entertainment, the decorations and flowers of which alone cost three hundred and fifty thousand francs. The whole had been arranged under the superintendence of Ballard, the

* Alexandre Dumas referred to a story in connection with the Comte de Saint-Simon and Madame de Staël which is not very generally known. One day the head of the new sect went to see the authoress of "Corinne." "Madame," he said, "vous êtes la femme la plus remarquable en France; moi, je suis l'homme le plus remarquable. Si nous nous arrangions à vivre quelques mois ensemble, nous aurions peut-être l'enfant le plus remarquable sur la terre." Madame de Staël politely declined the honour. As for the epithet of "l'ignorant" which Dumas was fond of applying to himself, it arose from the fact of Dumas, the celebrated professor of chemistry, being spoken of as "Dumas le savant." "Done," laughed the novelist, "je suis Dumas l'ignorant."—EDITOR.

architect of the Halles Centrales. But I remember one little incident which caused a flutter of surprise among the court ladies, who, even at that time, had already left off dancing in the pretty old-fashioned way, and merely walked through their quadrilles. The royal matron of thirty-five, with a goodly family growing up around her, executed every step as her dancing master had taught her, and with none of the listlessness that was supposed to be the "correct thing." I was standing close to Canrobert, who had been recalled to resume his functions near the Emperor. After watching the Queen for a minute or so, he turned round to the lady on his arm. "*Pardi, elle danse comme ses soldats se battent, 'en veux-tu, en voilà ;' et corrects jusqu'à la fin.*" There never was a greater admirer of the English soldier than Canrobert. The splendour of that fête at the Hôtel-de-Ville has only been surpassed once, in 1867, when the civic fathers entertained a whole batch of sovereigns.

On the 24th, there was a third visit to the Exhibition, and I remember eight magnificent carriages passing down the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. They were, however, only drawn by two horses each. I was making my way to the Champ de Mars, where a review was to be held in honour of her Majesty, and had told the cab to wait in the Rue Beaujon, while I stepped into the main road to have a look at the beautiful scene. The moment the carriages were past I returned to the Rue Beaujon, and ran up against Béranger, who was living there. The old man seemed in a great hurry, which was rather surprising, because he was essentially phlegmatic, and rarely put himself out for anything. So I asked him the reason of his haste. "I want to

see your queen," he replied. A year or two before he had refused to go to the Tuileries to see the Empress, who had sent for him ; and the latter, who could be most charming when she liked, had paid him a visit instead.

"I thought you did not trouble yourself much about royalty," I remarked. "You refused to go and see the Empress, and you rush along to see the Queen?"

"Non ; je vais voir la femme : s'il y avait beaucoup de femmes comme elle, je leur pardonnerais d'être reines."

Her Majesty has never heard of this. It was the most magnificent and, at the same time, most witty tribute to her private virtues. All this happened many, many years ago. Since then I have often wondered why Prince Albert, who, I feel certain, knew the worth of all these men as well as he knew the merit of the *littérateurs* of his own country, did not suggest to his august consort a reception such as she gave to the *corps diplomatique*. It would have been a most original thing to do ; the recollection of it would have been more delightful even than the most vivid recollections of that very wonderful week.

In those days, France was still looked upon as the first military power in Europe. Her soldiers were probably not superior to those who fell in the Franco-German war, but their prestige had not been questioned. They were also more sightly than the ill-clad legions of the Third Republic, so the review was a very splendid affair. At its termination, her Majesty repaired to the Invalides, to the tomb of Napoleon, which, though it had been begun, as I have incidentally stated, under the premiership of M. Guizot in 1846-47, was not finished then, and only officially inaugurated nearly six years afterwards.

My ticket for the review had been given to me by Marshal Vaillant, the minister for war, and the only Marshal of the Second Empire with whom I was, at that time, intimately acquainted; though I became on very friendly terms with Marshals MacMahon and Lebrun subsequently.

I will devote, by-and-by, a few notes to this most original soldier-figure—he was only a type in some respects; meanwhile, I may mention here an anecdote, in connection with this visit of the Queen, characteristic of the man. The governor of the Invalides was the late King of Westphalia, Jérôme Bonaparte. It was but natural that he should have been chosen as the custodian of his brother's last resting-place. It was equally natural that he should feel reluctant to meet at that tomb the sovereign of a country which, he considered, had tortured that brother to death. Consequently the last survivor of the elder Bonapartes, the one who had also fought at Waterloo, foreseeing, as it were, this pilgrimage on the part of her Majesty, had, a fortnight or so before the date of her intended visit, gone to Havre, whither he had been ordered by his doctor on account of his health, and whence he only returned when the Queen of England had left France.

The deputy-governor of the Invalides was, perhaps, not considered sufficiently important to do the honours to so illustrious a visitor, and Marshal Vaillant was sounded whether he would undertake the functions. He declined. "Je n'ai pas l'honneur, sire," he said, "d'appartenir à votre illustre famille et personne sauf la famille d'un grand homme a le droit d'oublier les souffrances que ses ennemis lui ont infligées." He was an honest, upright soldier, abrupt and self-willed, but

kindly withal, and plainly perceived the faults of Louis-Napoleon's policy and of his frequently misplaced generosity—above all, of his system of conciliating the sovereigns of Europe by fêtes and entertainments. “Quand l'autre leur donnait des fêtes et des représentations de théâtre, c'était chez eux, et pas chez nous, ils en payaient les frais.” More of him in a little while.

At the Queen's first visit to Versailles—the second took place on the Saturday before she left—she had been deeply moved at the sight of the picture representing her welcome at Eu by Louis-Philippe, to which ceremony I alluded in one of my former notes. But even before this she had expressed a wish to see the ruins of the Château de Neuilly, and the commemorative chapel erected on the spot where the Duc d'Orléans met with his fatal accident. “La femme qui est si fidèle à ses vieilles amitiés au milieu des nouvelles, surtout quand il s'agit de dynasties rivales, comme en ce moment, et quand cette femme est une reine, cette femme est une amie bien précieuse,” said Jérôme's son. Both the Emperor and the Empress found that their cousin had spoken truly.

Saturday, the 25th, had been fixed for the fête at Versailles. In the morning, the Queen went to the palace of Saint-Germain, which no English sovereign had visited since James II. lived there. She returned to Saint-Cloud, and thence to the magnificent abode of Louis XIV., which she reached after dark—the Place d'Armes and the whole of the erstwhile royal residence being brilliantly illuminated.

The Imperial and Royal party entered by the Marble Court, in the centre of which the pedestal to the

statue of Louis XIV. had been decorated with the rarest flowers. The magnificent marble staircase had, however, been laid with thick purple carpets, and the balustrades almost disappeared beneath masses of exotics; it was the first time, if I remember rightly, that I had seen mosses and ferns and foliage in such profusion. The Cent Gardes and the Guides de l'Impératrice were on duty, the former on the staircase itself, the latter below, in the vestibule. At the top, to the right and left, the private apartments of the Empress had been arranged, the Queen occupied those formerly belonging to Marie-Antoinette. I was enabled to see these a few days later; they were the most perfect specimens of the decorative art that flourished under Louis XVI. I have ever beheld. The boudoir was upholstered in light blue, festoons of roses running along the walls, and priceless Dresden groups distributed everywhere; the dressing-rooms were hung with pale green, with garlands upon garlands of violets. The toilet service was of Sèvres, with medallions after Lancret and Watteau. The historical Salle de l'Œil-de-Bœuf, which preceded her Majesty's apartments, had been transformed into a splendid reception-room for the use of the Imperial hosts and all their Royal guests, for there were one or two foreign princes besides, notably Prince Adalbert of Bavaria.

The ball was to take place in the famous Galerie des Glaces; the Empress herself had presided at its transformation, which had been inspired by a well-known print of "Une Fête sous Louis Quinze." More garlands of roses, but this time drooping from the ceiling and connecting the forty splendid lustres, which, together with the candelabra on the walls, could not

have contained less than three thousand wax candles. At each of the four angles of the vast apartment a small orchestra had been erected, but very high up, and surrounded by a network of gilt wire.

At the stroke of ten those wonderful gardens became all of a sudden ablaze with rockets and Chinese candles; it was the beginning of the fireworks, the principal piece of which represented Windsor Castle. After this, the ball was opened by the Queen and the Emperor, the Empress and Prince Albert; but though the example had been given, there was very little dancing. I was a comparatively young man then, but I was too busy feasting my eyes with the marvellous toilettes to pay much heed to the seductive strains, which at other times would have set me tripping. I fancy this was the case with most of the guests.

On the Monday the Queen left for home.

CHAPTER VIII.

Marshal Vaillant—The beginning of our acquaintance—His stories of the swashbucklers of the First Empire, and the beaux of the Restoration—Rabelaisian, but clever—Marshal Vaillant neither a swashbuckler nor a beau; hated both—Never cherished the slightest illusions about the efficiency of the French army—Acknowledged himself unable to effect the desired and necessary reforms—To do that, a minister of war must become a fixture—Why he stayed—Careful of the public moneys, and of the Emperor's also—Napoleon III.'s lavishness—An instance of it—Vaillant never dazzled by the grandeur of court entertainments—Not dazzled by anything—His hatred of wind-bags—Prince de Canino—Matutinal interviews—Prince de Canino sends his seconds—Vaillant declines the meeting, and gives his reason—Vaillant abrupt at the best of times—A freezing reception—A comic interview—Attempts to shirk military duty—Tricks—Mistakes—A story in point—More tricks—Sham ailments: how the marshal dealt with them—When the marshal was not in an amiable mood—Another interview—Vaillant's tactics—"D—d annoying to be wrong"—The marshal fond of science—A very interesting scientific phenomenon himself—Science under the later Bourbons—Suspicion of the soldiers of the Empire—The priesthood and the police—The most godless republic preferable to a continuance of their régime—The marshal's dog, Brusca—Her dislike to civilians—Brusca's chastity—Vaillant's objection to insufficiently prepaid letters—His habit of missing the train, notwithstanding his precautions—His objection to fuss and public honours.

ABOUT two or three days after the ball at Versailles, I went to see Marshal Vaillant at the War Office, to thank him for his kindness in sending me the ticket for the review. Our acquaintance was already then of a couple of years' standing. It had begun at Dr. Veron's, who lived, at the time, at the corner of the Rue de Rivoli and the Rue de Castiglione. The old soldier—he was over sixty then—had a very good

memory, and used to tell me garrison stories, love-adventures of the handsome swashbucklers of the First Empire and of the beaux of the Restauration. The language was frequently that of Rabelais or Molière, vigorous, to the point, calling a spade a spade, and, as such, not particularly adapted to these notes, but the narrator himself was neither a swashbuckler nor a beau; he hated the carpet-knight only one degree more than the sabreur, and when both were combined in the same man—not an unusual thing during the Second Empire, especially after the Crimean and Franco-Austrian wars—he simply loathed him. He fostered not the slightest illusions about the efficiency of the French army, albeit that, to an alien like myself and notwithstanding his friendship for me, he would veil his strictures. At the same time, he frankly acknowledged himself unable to effect the desired reforms. “It wants, first of all, a younger and abler man than I am; secondly, he must become a fixture. No change of ministry, no political vicissitudes ought to affect him. I do not play a political rôle, and never mean to play one; and if I could find a man who would carry out the reforms at the War Office, or, rather, reorganize the whole as it should be reorganized, I would make room for him to-morrow. I know what you are going to say. I derive a very comfortable income from my various offices, and I am a pluralist. If I did not take the money, some one else would who has not got a scrap more talent than I have. There is not a single man who dare tell the nation that its army is rotten to the core, that there is not a general who knows as much as a mere captain in the Austrian and Prussian armies; and if he had the courage to tell the

nation, he would be hounded out of the country, his life would be made a burden to him. That is one of the reasons why I am staying, because I can do no good by going; on the contrary, I might do a good deal of harm. . Because, as you see it, the three hundred and fifty thousand francs of my different appointments, I save them by looking after the money of the State. Not that I can do much, but I do what I can."

That was very true: he was very careful of the public moneys, and of the resources of the Emperor also, entrusted to him by virtue of his position as Grand-Maréchal du Palais; it was equally true that he could not do much. Napoleon was, by nature, lavish and soft-hearted; as a consequence, he became the butt of every impostor who could get a letter conveyed to him. His civil list of over a million and a half sterling was never sufficient. He himself was simple enough in his tastes, but he knew that pomp and state were dear to the heart of Frenchmen, and he indulged them accordingly. But his charity was a personal matter. He could have no more done without it than without his eternal cigarette. He called the latter "safety-valve of the brain; the former the safety-valve of pride." I remember an anecdote which was told to me by some one who was in his immediate entourage when he was only President. It was on the eve of a journey to some provincial town, and at the termination of a cabinet council. While talking to some of his ministers, he took a couple of five-franc pieces from his waistcoat, and spun them English fashion. "C'est tout ce qui me reste pour mon voyage de demain, messieurs," he said, smiling. One of them,

M. Ferdinand Barrot, saw that he was in earnest, and borrowed ten thousand francs, which the President found on his dressing-table when retiring for the night. Four and twenty hours after, Napoleon had not even his two five-franc pieces: they and M. Barrot's loan had disappeared in subscriptions to local charities. Among the papers found at the Tuileries after the Emperor's flight, there were over two thousand begging letters, all dated within a twelvemonth, and all marked with their answer in the corner—that is, with the amount sent in reply. That sum amounted to not less than sixty thousand francs. And be it remembered that these were the petitions the Emperor had not entrusted to his secretaries or ministers as coming within their domain. The words of Marshal Vaillant, spoken many years before, "I cannot do much, but I do what I can," are sufficiently explained.

On the day alluded to above, the marshal was seriously complaining of the Emperor's extravagance. He did not hold with entertaining so many sovereigns. "I do not say this," he added, "with regard to yours, for her hospitality deserved such return as the Emperor gave her; but with regard to the others who will come, you may be sure, if we last long enough. Well, we'll see; perhaps you'll remember my words."

In fact, the old soldier was never much dazzled by the grandeur of those entertainments, nor did he foster many illusions with regard to their true value in cementing international friendships. The marshal was not dazzled by anything; and though deferential enough to the members of the emperor's family, he never scrupled to tell them his mind. The Emperor's cousin (Plon-Plon) could tell some curious stories to

that effect. The marshal had a hatred of long-winded people, and especially of what Carlyle calls wind-bags. Another of Louis-Napoléon's cousins came decidedly under the latter description: I allude to the Prince de Canino. In order to get rid as much as possible of wordy visitors, Vaillant had hit upon the method of granting them their interviews at a *very, very* early hour in the morning; in the summer at 6.30 in the morning, in the winter at 7.15. "People do not like getting out of bed at that time, unless they have something serious to communicate," he said; and would not relax his rule, even for the softer sex. The old warrior, who had probably been an early riser all his life, found the arrangement work so well, that he determined at last not to make any exceptions. "I get the day to myself," he laughed. Now, it so happened that the Prince de Canino asked him for an interview; and, as a matter of course, Vaillant appointed the usual hour. Next morning, to Vaillant's great surprise, instead of the Prince, came two of his friends. The latter came to ask satisfaction of Vaillant for having dared to disturb a personage of the prince's importance at so early an hour. "Mais je ne l'ai pas dérangé du tout: il n'avait qu'à ne pas venir, ce que du reste, il a fait," said Vaillant; then he added, "Mais même, si je consentais à donner raison au prince de mon offense imaginaire, je ne me battrais pas à quatre heures de l'après-midi; donc, il aurait à se dé ranger; il vaut mieux qu'il reste dans son lit. Je vous salue, messieurs." With which he bowed them out. When the Emperor heard of it, he laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks, and Napoleon did not laugh outright very often or easily.

There are a great many stories about this objection of Marshal Vaillant to be troubled for nothing; and, as usual, they overshoot the mark. He is supposed to have acted very cavalierly with highly placed personages, and even with ladies in very high society. Of course, I was never present at interviews of that kind, but, during my long acquaintance with him, I was often seated at his side when less exalted visitors were admitted. At the best of times his manner was abrupt, though rarely rude, unless there was a reason for it, albeit that the outsider might fail to fathom it at the first blush. I remember being with him in his private room, somewhere about the sixties, when his attendant brought him a card.

"Show the gentleman in," said Vaillant, after having looked at it.

Enter, a tall, well-dressed individual, the rosette of the Legion of Honour in his button-hole, evidently a retired officer.

"What is it you want with me?" asked the marshal, who had remained seated with his back towards the visitor.

"Being in Paris for the Christmas and New Year's holidays, your excellency, I thought it my duty to pay my respects to you."

"Is that all you want with me?" asked the marshal.

"That is all, your excellency," stammered the visitor.

"Very well: then I'll wish you good morning."

I suppose I must have looked somewhat shocked at this very uncereemonious proceeding, for, when the door was closed, the marshal explained.

"You need not think that I have done him an

injustice. When fellows like this present their respects it always means that they want me to present them with something else ; that is why I cut them short."

Sometimes these interviews took a comical turn, for the marshal could be very witty when he liked. In the land of "equality," everybody is always on the look-out for greater privileges than his fellows, and in no case were and are favours more indiscriminately requested than with the view of avoiding military service. A thousand various pretexts, most of them utterly ridiculous, were brought forward by the parents to preserve their precious sons from the hated barrack life. In many instances, a few years of soldiering would have done those young hopefuls a great deal of good, because those who clamoured loudest for exemption were only spending their time in idleness and mischief. In the provinces there was a chance of influencing the *conseil de révision* by means of the *préfet*, if the parents were known to be favourable to the government ; by means of the bishops, if they still had a hankering after the former dynasties ; and, not to mince matters, if they were simply rich, by means of bribery. In Paris the matter was somewhat more difficult ; the members of the council were frequently changed at the last moment, and at all times the recruits to be examined were too numerous for a parent to trust to the memory of those members. The military authorities had introduced a new rule, to the effect that the names of the recruits to be examined should not be called out until their examination was finished ; and, with the best will in the world, it is often difficult to distinguish between un fils de famille and a downright plebeian if both happen to come

before you "as God made them." Consequently, notwithstanding the considerable ingenuity of the parties interested to let the examining surgeon-major know "who was who," mistakes frequently occurred; the young artisan, who had no more the matter with him than the young wealthy bourgeois, was dismissed as unfit for the service, while the latter was pronounced apt in every respect.

Apropos of this, I know a good story, for the truth of which I can vouch, because it happened to a member of the family with which I became connected by marriage afterwards. He had a son who was of the same age as his coachman's. Both the lads went to draw at the same time, both drew low numbers. The substitute system was still in force, but, just at that moment, there was a war-scare—not without foundation—and substitutes reached high prices. It would not have mattered much to the rich man. Unfortunately, he was tight-fisted, and the mother pleaded in vain. The wife was just as extravagant as the husband was mean; she had no savings, and she cudgelled her brain to find the means of preserving her darling from the vile contact of his social inferiors without putting her hand in her pocket—which, moreover, was empty. She went a great deal into society, was very handsome, clever, and fascinating. By dint of ferreting, she got to know the probable composition of the conseil de révision—barring accidents. History does not say how, but she wheedled the surgeon-major into giving her a distinct promise to do his best for her dear son. Of course, in order to do some good, the surgeon had to see the young fellow first; and there was the difficulty, because madame

had made the acquaintance of the officer under peculiar circumstances, and could not very well introduce him to her home: besides, just on account of the war-scare, the authorities had become very strict, the practices of many officers were suspected, and it would never have done for the gentleman to give his superiors as much as a loophole for their suspicion by visiting the lady. Time was getting short; the acquaintance had ripened into friendship very quickly, because, three days before the time appointed for the sitting of the council, madame had never seen the surgeon, and on the eve of that sitting the final arrangement had been concluded. It was to this effect: that madame's son would pretend to have hurt his hand, and appear with a black silk bandage round his wrist. The thing is scarcely credible, but the coachman's son, an engine-fitter, had hurt his wrist, and put a strip of black ribbon round it. The coachman's family name began with a *B*, the lady's name with a *C*. The coachman's son was taken for the other, and declared unfit for military service by reason of his chest, to his great surprise and joy, as may be imagined. But the surprise, though not the joy, of the examining officer was greater still when, in the next batch, another young fellow appeared with a strip of black ribbon round his wrist. To ask his name was an impossibility. The surgeon was afraid that he had been betrayed, or that his secret had leaked out, and, without a moment's hesitation, declared the real Simon Pure sound in lungs and limb.

I am afraid I have drifted a little bit from Marshal Vaillant's comical interviews, but am coming back to them in a roundabout way. The common, or garden

trick to get those young fellows exempted, where bribery was impossible or private influence out of the question, was to make them sham short-sightedness, or deafness, or impediment in the speech. We have heard before now of professors who cure people of stammering: it is a well-known fact that in those days there was a professor who taught people to stammer; while, personally, I know an optician on the Boulevard des Italiens whose father made a not inconsiderable fortune by spoiling young fellows' sights—that is, by training them, for a twelvemonth before the drawing of lots, to wear very powerful lenses. Of course, this had to be done gradually, and his fee was a thousand francs. I have known him to have as many as twenty or thirty pupils at a time. No doubt the authorities were perfectly aware of this, but they had no power to interfere. The process for "teaching deafness" was even a more complicated one, but it did succeed for a time in imposing upon the experts, until, by a ministerial decree, it was resolved to draft all these clever stammerers, and even those who were really suffering from the complaints the others simulated, into the transport and medical services.

It was then that Marshal Vaillant was overwhelmed with visits from anxious matrons who wanted to save their sons, and that the comical interviews took place.

"But, excellency, my son is really as deaf as a post," one would exclaim.

"All the better, madame: he won't be frightened at the first sound of serious firing. Nearly all young recruits are terror-stricken at the first whizzing of the bullets around them. I was, myself, I assure you. He'll make an admirable soldier."

"But he won't be able to hear the word of command."

"Not necessary, madame; he'll only have to watch the others, and do as they do. Besides, we'll draft him into the cavalry: it is really the charger that obeys the signals, not the trooper. It will be an advantage to him to be deaf in the barrack-room, for there are many things said there that would bring a blush to his nice innocent cheeks; and, upon the whole, it is best he should not hear them. I have the honour to wish you good morning, madame."

And though the woman knew that the old soldier was mercilessly chaffing her and her milksop son, the thing was done so politely and so apparently seriously on the marshal's part, that she was fain to take no for an answer.

On one occasion, it appears—for the marshal liked to tell these tales, and he was not a bad mimic—he had just dismissed a lady similarly afflicted with a deaf son, when another entered whose offspring suffered from an impediment in his speech. "Madame," the marshal said, without moving a muscle, "your son will realize the type of the soldier immortalized by M. Scribe in 'Les Huguenots.' You know what Marcel sings." And, striking a theatrical attitude, he trolled—

"'Un vieux soldat sait souffrir et se taire
Sans murmurer.'"

With this additional advantage," he went on, "that your son will be a young one. I can, however, promise you another comfort. A lady has just left me whose son is as deaf as a post. I'll not only see that your son is drafted into the same company, but I'll make it my special business to have their beds placed side

by side. The young fellow can go on stammering as long as he likes, it won't offend his comrade's hearing."

"But my son is very short-sighted, as blind as a bat, your excellency; he won't be able to distinguish the friend from the foe," expostulated a third lady.

"Don't let that trouble you, madame," was the answer; "we'll put him in the infantry: he has only got to blaze away, he is sure to hit some one or something."

These were the scenes when the marshal was in an amiable mood; when he was not, he would scarcely suffer the slightest remark; but, if the remark was ventured upon, it had to be effectual, to be couched in language as abrupt as his. "Soft-sawder" he hated above all things; and even when he was wrong, he would not admit it to any one who whined or spoke prettily. On the other hand, when the visitor or petitioner became as violent as he was himself, he often reversed his decision. One day, while waiting for the marshal, I met in the anteroom an individual who, by his surly looks, was far from pleased. After striding up and down for a while, he began to bang on the table, and to shout at the top of his voice, calling the old soldier all kinds of names. Out came the marshal in his shirt-sleeves—the moment the lady-visitors were gone he always took off his coat. "Come back, monsieur," he said to the individual. In a few moments, the latter came out of the marshal's private room, his face beaming with joy. Then I went in, and found the marshal rubbing his hands with glee. "A capital fellow, after all, a capital fellow," he kept on saying.

"He may be a capital fellow," I remarked, "but he is not very choice in his language."

"That's only his way; he does not like to be refused things, but he is a capital fellow for all that, and that's why I granted his request. If he had whined about it, I should not have done so, though I think he is entitled to what he came for."

Strategical skill, in the sense the Germans have taught us since to attach to the word, Marshal Vaillant had little or none. Most of his contemporaries, even the younger generals, were scarcely better endowed than their official chief. They were all good soldiers when it came to straightforward fighting, as they had been obliged to do in Africa, but there was not a great leader, scarcely an ordinary tactician, among them. As I have already shown, among the men most painfully aware of this was the marshal himself; nevertheless, when he once made up his mind to a course of action, it was almost impossible to dissuade him from it. He had set his heart upon Marshal Niel occupying the Aland island during the winter of '54-55, in the event of Bomarsund falling into French hands. He did not for a moment consider that the fourteen thousand troops were too few to hold it, if the Russians cared to contest its possession,—too many, if they merely confined themselves to intercepting the supplies, which they could have done without much difficulty. A clever young diplomatist, who knew more about those parts than the whole of the intelligence department at the Ministry for War, at last made him abandon his decision. I came in as he went out; the marshal was as surly as a bear with a sore head. "Clever fellow this," he growled, "very clever fellow." And

then, in short jerky sentences, he told me the whole of the story, asking my opinion as to who was right and who was wrong. I told him frankly that I thought that the young diplomatist was right. "That's what I think," he spluttered; "but you'll admit that it is d——d annoying to be wrong."

It would be wrong to infer that the marshal, though deficient as a strategist, was the rough-and-ready soldier, indifferent to more cultured pursuits, as so many of his fellow-officers were. He was very fond of certain branches of science, and rarely missed a meeting of the scientific section of the Académie, of which he was a member. What attracted him most, however, was astronomy; next to that came entomology and botany. Still, though an enthusiast, and often risking a cold to observe an astral phenomenon, he objected to wasting thousands of pounds for a similar purpose; in fact, when it came to disbursing government money for a scientific or other vaguely defined purpose, his economic tendencies got the better of him. "I am a very interesting scientific phenomenon myself," he used to say, "or, at any rate, I was; and yet no one spent any money to come and see me."

He was alluding to a fact which he often told me himself, and afterwards narrated in his "memoirs."

"For a long while, especially from 1818 to 1830, when the weather happened to be very dry and cold, and when I returned to my grateless, humble room, after having spent the day in heated apartments, I was both the spectator and the medium of strange electrical phenomena.

"The moment I had undressed and stood in my

shirt, the latter began to crackle and became absolutely luminous, emitting a lot of sparks; the tails stuck together, and remained like that for some time."

I asked him, on one occasion, whether he had ever communicated all this to scientific authorities. His answer, though not a direct one to my question, was not only very characteristic of the mental and moral attitude of the soldiers of the Empire towards the Bourbons, but, to a great extent, of the attitude of the Bourbons themselves towards everybody and everything that was not absolutely in accordance with the policy, sociology, and religious tenets of their adherents, whether laymen or priests.

"You must remember, my dear fellow," he replied, "the régime under which we lived when I was subject to those electrical manifestations; you must further remember that I had fought at Ligny and at Waterloo, and, though not absolutely put on the retired list in 1815, I and the rest of the Emperor's soldiers were watched, and our most innocent acts construed into so many small attempts at conspiracy. You have not the slightest idea what the police were like under the Restoration, let alone the priesthood. If I couple these two, I am not speaking at random. If I had communicated the things I told you of, to no matter what savant, he would necessarily have published the result of his observations and experiments, and do you know what would have happened? I should have been tried, and perhaps condemned, for witchcraft—yes, for witchcraft,—or else I should have been taken hold of by the priests, not as a scientific phenomenon, but as a religious one, a kind of *stigmatisé*. They would have

made it out to their satisfaction that I was either half a saint, or a whole devil, and in either case my life would have become a burden to me. Only those who have lived under the Bourbons can form an idea of the terrorizing to which they lent themselves. People may tell you that they were kind and charitable, and this, that, and the other. There never were greater tyrants than they were at heart; and if the Duc d'Angoulême or the Comte de Chambord had come to the throne, France would have sunk to the intellectual level of Spain. I would sooner see the most godless republic than a return to that state of things, and I need not tell you that I firmly believe that not a sparrow falls to the earth without God's will. No, I held my tongue about my electrical sensations; if I had not, you would not now be talking to Marshal Vaillant—I should have become a jabbering idiot, if I had lived long enough." It is the longest speech I have ever heard the marshal make.

The marshal's own rooms were simply crammed with cases full of beetles, butterflies, etc. The space not taken up by these was devoted to herbariums; and in the midst of the most interesting conversation—interesting to the listener especially, for the old soldier was an inexhaustible mine of anecdote—he, the listener, would be invited to look at a bit of withered grass or a wriggling caterpillar.

After the Franco-Austrian war, there was an addition to the marshal's household—I might say family, for the old man became as fond of Brusca as if she had been a human being. The story went that she had been bequeathed to him at Solferino by her former master, an Austrian general; and the marshal did not

deny it. At any rate, he found Brusca sitting by the dying man, and licking the blood oozing from his wounds.

Brusca was not much to look at, and you might safely have defied a committee of the most eminent authorities on canine breeds to determine hers, but she was very intelligent, and of a most affectionate disposition. Nevertheless, she was always more or less distant with civilians: it took me many years to worm myself into her good graces, and I am almost certain that I was the only *pékin* thus favoured. The very word made her prick up her ears, show her teeth, and straighten her tail as far as she could. For the appendage did not lend itself readily to the effort: it was in texture like that of a colley or Pomeranian, and twisted like that of a pug. Curiously enough, her objection to civilians did not extend to the female portion, but the sight of a blouse drove her frantic with rage. On such occasions, she had to be chained up. As a rule, however, Brusca's manifestations, whether of pleasure or the reverse, were uttered in a minor key and unaccompanied by any change of position on her part. She mostly lay at the marshal's feet, if she was not perched on the back of his chair, for Brusca was not a large dog. She accompanied the marshal in his walks and drives, she sat by his side at table, she slept on a rug at the foot of his bed. Now and then she took a gentle stroll through the apartment, carefully examining the dried plants and beetles. But one day, or rather one evening, there was a complete change in her behaviour: it was at one of the marshal's receptions, on the occasion of Emperor Francis-Joseph's visit to Paris. Some of the officers of his Majesty's suite had been invited, and

at the sight of the, to her, once familiar uniforms her delight knew no bounds. She was standing at the top of the landing when she caught sight of them, and all those present thought for a moment that the creature was going mad. As a matter of course, Brusca was not allowed to come into the reception-rooms, but on that night there was no keeping her out. Locked up in the marshal's bed-room, she made the place ring with her barks and yells, and they had to let her out. With one bound she was in the drawing-rooms, and for three hours she did not leave the side of the Austrian officers. When they took their departure, Brusca was perfectly ready, nay eager, to abandon her home and her fond master for their sake, and had to be forcibly prevented from doing so. The marshal did not know whether to cry or to laugh, but in the end he felt ready to forgive Brusca for her contemplated desertion of him in favour of her countrymen. Some one who objected to the term got the snub direct. "*Je maintiens ce que j'ai dit, compatriotes; et je serais rudement fier d'avoir une compatriote comme elle.*"

If possible, Brusca from that moment rose in the marshal's estimation; she was a perfect paragon. "*Cette chienne n'a pas seulement toutes les qualités de son genre, elle n'a même pas les vices de son sexe. Elle m'aime tellement bien qu'elle ne veut être distraite par aucun autre amour. Elle vit dans le plus rigoureux célibat. La malheureuse,*" he said every now and then, "*elle a failli se compromettre.*"

In spite of the marshal's boast about Brusca's morals, he was one day compelled to admit a faux pas on her part, and for some weeks the "vet" had an anxious time of it. "*Elle a mal tourné, mais que*

voulez-vous, je ne vais pas l'abandonner." And when the crisis was over: "Son incartade ne lui a pas porté bonheur. Espérons que la leçon lui profitera."

Brusca had her portrait painted by the "Michael-Angelo of dogs," Jadin, and when it was finished the visitors were given an opportunity of admiring it in the drawing-room, where it was on view for several consecutive Tuesdays. After that, a great many of the marshal's familiars, supposed to be capable of doing justice to Brusca's character in verse, were appealed to, to write her panegyric, but though several Academicians tried their hands, their lucubrations were not deemed worthy to be inscribed on the frame of Brusca's portrait, albeit that one or two—the first in Greek—were engrossed on vellum, and adorned the drawing-room table. The effusion that did eventually adorn the frame was by an anonymous author—it was shrewdly suspected that it was by the marshal himself, and ran as follows:—

"Si je suis près de lui, c'est que je le mérite.
Rêvez mon sort brillant; rêvez, ambitieux!
Du bien de mon maître en ami je profite,
J'aimerais son pain noir s'il était malheureux."

Another peculiarity of Marshal Vaillant was never to accept a letter not prepaid or insufficiently paid. The rule was so strictly enforced, both in his private and official capacity, that many a valuable report was ruthlessly refused, and had to be traced afterwards through the various post-offices of Europe.

Seven times out of ten the marshal, when travelling by himself, missed his train. This would lead one to infer that he was unpunctual; on the contrary, he was the spirit of punctuality. Unfortunately, he over-did the thing. He generally reached the station half an

hour or three-quarters before the time, seated himself down in a corner, dozed off, and did not wake up until it was too late. The marshal was a native of Dyon; and at Nuits, situated between the former town and Beaune, there lived a middle-aged spinster cousin whom he often went to visit. He nearly always returned by the last train to Dyon, where he had his quarters at the Hôtel de la Cloche; and although often in the midst of a pleasant family party, insisted upon leaving long before it was necessary. As a matter of course, the station was in semi-darkness—for Nuits is not a large place—and the booking-office was not open. One night, it being very warm, he stretched himself leisurely on a grass plot, instead of on the hard seat, and there he was found at six in the morning: several trains had come and gone, but no one had dared to wake him. "Mais, monsieur le maréchal, on aurait cru vous manquer de respect en vous éveillant. Après tout, vous n'êtes pas tout le monde, il y des distinctions," said the stationmaster apologetically. "La mort et le sommeil, monsieur," was the answer, "font table rase de toute distinction." It was a French version of our "Death levels all:" the marshal was fond of paraphrasing quotations, especially from the English, of which he had a very fair knowledge, having translated some military works many years before. However, from that day forth, instructions were given to take no heed of his rank, and to awaken him like any other mortal, rather than have him miss his train.

In fact, the marshal did not like to be constantly reminded of his rank; if anything, he was rather proud of his very humble origin, and, instead of hiding his pedigree like a good many parvenus, he took delight

in publishing it. I have seen a letter of his to some one who inquired on the subject, not from sheer curiosity. "My grandfather was a silkmercer in a small way on the place St. Vincent, at Dyon. His father had been a coppersmith. I am unable to trace back further than that; my quarters of nobility stop there. Let me add, at the same time, that there is no more silly proverb than the one 'Like father like son.' My father died poor, and respected by every one. I do not believe that he had a single enemy. His friends called him Christ, he was so good and kind to everybody. I am not the least like him. He was short and slim, I am rather tall and stout; he was gentle, and people say that I am abrupt and harsh. In short, he had as many virtues as I am supposed to have faults, and I am afraid the world is not at all mistaken in that respect."

I, who knew him as well as most people, am afraid that the world was very much mistaken. As a matter of course, the old soldier had many faults, but his good qualities far outweighed the latter. He was modest to a degree, and the flatteries to which men in his position are naturally exposed produced not the slightest effect upon him. When in an amiable mood, he used to cut them short with a "Oui, oui; le maréchal Vaillant est un grand homme, il n'y a pas de doute; tout le monde est d'accord sur ce chapitre là, donc, n'en parlons plus." When not in an amiable mood, he showed them the door, saying, "Monsieur, si je suis aussi grand homme que vous le dites, je suis trop grand pour m'occuper de vos petites affaires. J'ai l'honneur de vous saluer."

He was fond of his native town, one of whose streets

bore or still bears his name, though, according to all authorities, it never smelt sweet by whatsoever appellation it went. But he objected to being lionized, so he never stayed with the prefect, the maire, or the general commanding the district, and simply took up his quarters at the hotel, insisting on being treated like any other visitor. The maire respected his wishes; the population did not, which was a sore point with the marshal. Nevertheless, when, in 1858, during their Exhibition, they wanted him to distribute the prizes, he consented to do so, on condition that his reception should be of the simplest. The Dyonnais promised, and to a certain extent kept their word. Next morning the prefect, accompanied by the authorities, fetched him in his carriage. The ceremony was to take place in the park itself, and at the entrance was posted General Picard, accompanied by his staff, and at the head of several battalions. The moment the marshal set foot to the ground, the general saluted, the drums rolled, and the bands played. The marshal felt wroth, and at the conclusion of the distribution sent for the general, whom, not to mince matters, he roundly bullied.

General Picard did not interrupt him. "Have you finished, monsieur le maréchal?" he asked at last.

"Of course, I have finished."

"Very well; the next time you come out as a simple bourgeois, you had better leave the grand cordon of the Legion of Honour at home. If I had not saluted you as I did, I should have had the reprimand of the minister of war, and of the chancellor of the Legion of Honour. After all, I prefer yours."

"But I am the minister for war."

"I know nothing about that. I only saw an old gentleman with the grand cordon. If you are the minister for war, perhaps you will be good enough to tell Maréchal Vaillant, when you see him, that he must not tempt old soldiers like myself to forget their duty."

"You are right, general. But what a hot fiery lot these Dyonnais are, aren't they?" Picard was a native of Dyon also.

CHAPTER IX.

The Franco-German War—Friday, July 15, 1870, 6 p.m.—My friends “confident of France being able to chastise the insolence of the King of Prussia”—I do not share their confidence; but do not expect a crushing defeat—Napoleon III.’s presence aggravated the disasters; his absence would not have averted them—He himself had no illusions about the efficiency of the army, did not suspect the rottenness of it—His previous endeavours at reorganization—The real drift of his proposed inquiries—His plan meant also compulsory service for every one—Why the legislature opposed it—The makeshift proposed by it—Napoleon weary, body and soul—His physical condition—A great consultation and the upshot of it—Dr. Ricord and what he told me—I am determined to see and hear, though not to speak—I sally forth—The streets on the evening of Friday, the 15th of July—The illuminations—Patriotism or Chauvinism—The announcement of a bookseller—What Moltke thought of it—The opinion of a dramatist on the war—The people; no horse-play—No work done on Saturday and Sunday—Cabmen—“A man does not pay for his own funeral, monsieur”—The northern station on Sunday—The departing Germans—The Emperor’s particular instructions with regard to them—Alfred de Musset’s “Rhin Allemand”—Prévost-Paradol and the news of his suicide—The probable cause of it—A chat with a superior officer—The Emperor’s Sunday receptions at the Tuileries—Promotions in the army, upon what basis—Good and bad officers—The officers’ mess does not exist—Another general officer gives his opinion—Marshal Niel and Lebœuf—The plan of campaign suddenly altered—The reason—The Emperor leaves St. Cloud—His confidence shaken before then—Some telegrams from the commanders of divisions—Thiers is appealed to, to stem the tide of retrenchment; afterwards to take the portfolio of war—The Emperor’s opinion persistently disregarded at the Tuileries—Trochu—The dancing colonels at the Tuileries.

AFTER the lapse of thirteen years, it is difficult to put the exact hour and date to each exciting incident of a period which was absolutely phenomenal throughout. I kept no diary, only a few rough notes, because

at that time I never thought of committing my recollections to paper, and have, therefore, to trust almost wholly to my memory; nevertheless I am positive as to main facts, whether witnessed by myself or communicated to me by friends and acquaintances. I remember, for instance, that, immediately after the declaration of war, I was warned by my friends not to go abroad more than I could help, to keep away as much as possible from crowds. "You are a foreigner," said one, "and that will be sufficient for any ragamuffin, who wants to do you a bad turn, to draw attention to you. By the time you have satisfactorily proved your nationality you will be beaten black and blue, if not worse."

The advice was given on Friday, the 15th of July, about six in the afternoon; that is, a few hours after the news of the scenes in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate had spread, and when the centre of Paris was getting gradually congested with the inhabitants of the faubourgs. My friends were men of culture and education, and not at all likely to be carried away by the delirium which, on that same night and for the next week, converted Paris into one vast lunatic asylum, whose inmates had managed to throw off the control of their keepers; yet there was not a single civilian among them who had a doubt about the eventual victory of France, about her ability "to chastise the arrogance of the King of Prussia," to put the matter in their own words.

"To try to be wise after the event" is a thing I particularly detest, but I can honestly affirm that I did not share their confidence, although I did not suspect for a moment that the defeat would be so crushing as it

was. I remembered many incidents that had happened during the previous four years of which they seemed conveniently oblivious; I was also aware, perhaps, of certain matters of which they were either profoundly ignorant, or professed to be; but, above all, I took to heart the advice, tendered in the shape of, "You are a foreigner;" and though I feared no violence or even verbal recrimination on their part, I chose to hold my tongue.

I hold no brief for the late Emperor, but I sincerely believe that he was utterly averse to the war. I, moreover, think that if he had consented to remain in Paris or at St. Cloud, the disaster would have happened all the same. He had no illusions about the efficiency of his armies, though he may not have been cognizant of the thorough rottenness of the whole. But to have said so at any time, especially during the last four years, would have been simply to sign the death-warrant of his dynasty. He endeavoured to remedy the defects in a roundabout way as early as October, '66, by appointing a commission to draw up a plan for the reorganization of the army. Apparently, Napoleon wanted larger contingents; in reality, he hoped that the inquiry would lay bare such evidence of corruption as would justify him in dismissing several of the men surrounding him from their high commands. But both those who only saw the apparent drift as well as those who guessed at the real one were equally determined in their opposition. It was the majority in the Legislature which first uttered the cry, immediately taken up by the adversaries of the régime, "If this bill becomes law there will be an end of favourable numbers." In fact, the bill meant

compulsory service for every one, and the consent of the deputies to it would at once have forfeited their position with their electors, especially with the peasantry, to whom to apply the word "patriotism" at any time is tantamount to the vilest prostitution of it.

Of the makeshift for that law I need say little or nothing. Without a single spy in France, without a single attaché in the Rue de Lille, Bismarck was enabled by that only to determine beforehand the effects of one serious military defeat on the dynasty of the Emperor; he was enabled to calculate the exact strength of the chain of defence which would be offered subsequently. The French army was like the Scotch lad's porridge, "sour, burnt, gritty, cold, and, — it, there was not enough of it." It is not under-rating Bismarck's genius to say that a man of far inferior abilities than he would have plainly seen the course to pursue.

Was Napoleon III. steeped in such crass ignorance as not to have had an inkling of all this? Certainly not; but he was weary, body and soul, and, but for his wife and son, he would, perhaps willingly, have abdicated. He had been suffering for years from one of the most excruciating diseases, and a fortnight before the declaration of war the symptoms had become so alarming that a great consultation was held between MM. Nélaton, Ricord, Fauvel, G. Sée, and Corvisart. The result was the unanimous conclusion of those eminent medical men that an immediate operation was absolutely necessary. Curiously enough, however, the report embodying this decision was only signed by one, and not communicated to the

Empress at all. It may be taken for granted that, had she known of her husband's condition, she would not have agitated in favour of the war, as she undoubtedly did.

It was only after the Emperor's death at Chislehurst that the document in question was found, but I happened to know Dr. Ricord intimately, and most of the facts, besides those stated above, were known to me on that memorable Friday, the 15th of July, 1870. As I have said already, I thought it wiser to hold my tongue.

But though determined *not to speak*—knowing that it would do no earthly good—I was equally determined *to see and to hear*; so, at about eight, I sallied forth. The heat was positively stifling, and it was still daylight, but, in their eagerness to show their joy, the Parisians would not wait for darkness to set in, and, as I went along, I saw several matrons of the better classes, aided by their maids, make preparations on the balcony for illuminating the moment the last rays of the sun should set behind the horizon. I distinctly saw matrons of the better classes, because my way lay through the *Chaussée d'Antin*, where the tenancy of an apartment on the first, second, or third floor implied a more than average income. I was, and am, aware that neither refinement nor good sense should be measured by the money at one's command, but under similar circumstances it is impossible to apply any other valid test. In the streets there was one closely wedged-in, seething mass, and the noise was deafening; nevertheless, at the sight of one of those matrons thus engaged there was a momentary lull, followed immediately by vociferous applause and the

cry of "*Les mères de la patrie.*" From a cursory glance upward, I came to the conclusion that the progeny of these ladies, if they were blessed with any, could as yet contribute but very little to the glory of the nation; still, I reflected, at the same time, that they had probably brothers and husbands who, within a few hours, might be called to the front, "nevermore to return;" that, therefore, the outburst of patriotism could not be called an altogether cheap one. In fact, none but the thoroughly irreclaimable sceptic could fail to be struck with the genuine outburst of national resentment against a whole nation on the part of another nation, which, as I take it, means something different from unalloyed patriotism. It was a mixture of hatred and chauvinism, rather than the latter and more elevated sentiment. The "sacred soil of France"—though why more sacred than any other soil, I have never been able to make out—was not threatened in this instance by Prussia; carefully considered, it was not even a question of national honour offended for which Paris professed itself ready as one man to draw the sword, and yet the thousands in the street that night behaved as if each of them had a personal quarrel to settle, not with one or two Germans, but with every son and daughter of the Fatherland.

It was, perhaps, a quarter after eight when I found myself in the *Chaussée d'Antin*, and the distance to the *Boulevard des Italiens* was certainly not more than two hundred and fifty yards; nevertheless, it took me more than half an hour to get over it, for immediately on my emerging into the main thoroughfare I looked at a clock which pointed to nine. Two things stand out vividly in my memory:

the first, the preparations of several business houses to illuminate on a grand scale, there and then; i.e. the putting up of the elaborate crystal devices used by them on the 15th of August, the Emperor's fête-day. It was exactly a month before that date, and a neighbour of an enthusiastic tradesman remarked upon the fact. "I know," was the answer; "I'll leave it there till the 14th of next month, and then I'll add two bigger ones to it." On the day proposed, not only were there none added, but the original one had also disappeared, for by that time the Second Empire was virtually in the throes of death. The second thing I remember was the enormous strip of calico outside a bookseller's shop, with the announcement, "*Dictionnaire Français-Allemand à l'usage des Français à Berlin.*" In less than two months I read the following; it was an extract from the interview between Bismarck and Moltke on the one side and General de Wimpffen on the other, on the eve of the capitulation of Sedan: "You do not know the topography of the environs of Sedan," replied General von Moltke; "and, seeing that we are on the subject, let me give you a small instance which thoroughly shows the presumption, the want of method, of your nation. At the beginning of the campaign, you provided your officers with maps of Germany, when they utterly lacked the means of studying the geography of their own country, seeing that you had no maps of your own territory." I could not help thinking of the bookseller, and wondering how many dictionaries he sold during those first few days.

I did not get very far that night, only as far as the *Maison d'Or*, where I was perforce obliged to stop and

look on. I stood for nearly an hour and a half, for there was no possibility of getting a seat, and during that time I only heard one opinion adverse to the war. It was that of a justly celebrated dramatist, who is by no means hostile to either the Emperor or the Empire, albeit that he had declined several years ago to be presented to Napoleon when Princess Mathilde offered him to do so. He positively hates the Germans, but his hatred did not blind him to their great intellectual qualities and to their powers of organization. "It is all very fine to shout 'À Berlin!'" he said; "and it is very probably that some of these bellowers (braillards) will get there, though not in the order of procession they expect; they will be in front, and the Germans at their backs." He spoke very low, and begged me not to repeat what he had said. "If I am mistaken, I do not want to be twitted with having thrown cold water on the martial ardour of my countrymen; if I am right, I will willingly forego the honour of having prophesied the humiliation of my countrymen." That is why I suppress his name here, but I have often thought of his words since; and when people, Englishmen especially, have accused him of having contributed to the corruption of the Second Empire by his stage works, I have smiled to myself. With the exception of one, he has never written a play that did not teach a valuable moral lesson; but he is an excellent husband, father, and son, though he is perhaps not over generous with his money.

I am bound to say that, though the noise on the Boulevards was terrific, and the crowds the densest I have ever seen in Paris or anywhere, they refrained

from that horse-play so objectionable in England under similar circumstances. Of course there were exceptions; such as, for instance, the demonstration at the Prussian Embassy: but, in the main, the behaviour was orderly throughout. I do not know what might have been the result of any foreigners—German or otherwise—showing themselves conspicuously, but they were either altogether absent, or else concealed their nationality as much as possible by keeping commendably silent.

Nevertheless, the Parisian shopkeeper, who is the most arrant coward on the face of the earth where a crowd is concerned, put up his shutters during the whole of Saturday and Sunday, except those who professed to cater for the inner man. I doubt whether, on the first-named day, there was a single stroke of work done by the three or four hundred thousand of Parisian artisans. I exclude cabmen, railway porters, and the like. They had their hands full, because the exodus began before the war news was four and twenty hours old. Our own countrymen seemed in the greatest hurry to put the Channel between themselves and France. If the enemy had been already at the gates of Paris their retreat could have been scarcely more sudden. The words "bouches inutiles" had as yet not been pronounced or invented officially; but I have a notion that a cabman suggested them first, in a conversation with a brother Jehu. "Voilà des bouches utiles qui s'en vont, mon vieux," he said, while waiting on the Place Vendôme to take passengers to the railway. Until then I had never heard the word used in that sense.

Apropos of cabmen, I heard a story that day for the truth of which I will, however, not vouch. There was

a cab-stand near the Prussian Embassy, and most of the drivers knew every one of the attachés, the latter being frequent customers. On the Saturday morning, a cab was called from the rank to take a young attaché to the eastern railway station. He was going to join his regiment. On alighting from the cab, the attaché was about to pay his fare; the driver refused the money. "A man does not pay for his own funeral, monsieur; and you may take it that I have performed that office for you. Adieu, monsieur." With that he drove off. True or not, the mere invention of the tale would prove that, at any rate, the lower middle classes were cocksure of the utter annihilation of the Germans.

I happened to have occasion to go to the northern station on the Sunday, to see some one off by the mail. That large, cold, bare hall, which does duty as a waiting-room, was crowded, and a number of young Germans were among the passengers; respectable, stalwart fellows who, to judge by their dress, had occupied good commercial positions in the French capital. Most of them were accompanied by friends or relations. They seemed by no means elated at the prospect before them, and scarcely spoke to one another. As a matter of course, they were scattered all over the place, in groups of three and four. I noticed that there was an exceedingly strong contingent of sergents de ville, and several couples of officiers de paix—what in England we should call superintendents of police. The latter had evidently received particular instructions, for they had posted, as much as possible, a sergent de ville close to every group. At first I mistook the drift of the supervision, but it was soon explained to me when one of the officiers de paix

came up to a group somewhat larger than the others. "Messieurs," he said very politely, "*vous êtes Allemands, et je vous prierai de vous mettre ensemble, afin de pouvoir vous protéger, s'il y a besoin.*" I heard afterwards that, amidst all his weighty occupations, the Emperor himself had given orders to have the Germans especially protected, as he feared some violence on the part of the Parisians.

During the next week the excitement did not abate, but, save for some minor incidents, it was the same thing over and over again: impromptu processions along the main thoroughfares to the singing of the "*Marseillaise*" and the "*Chant du Départ*," until the crowds had got by heart Alfred de Musset's "*Rhin Allemand*," of which, until then, not one in a thousand had ever heard.

Meanwhile the news had spread of the suicide of Prévost-Paradol, the newly appointed French ambassador at Washington, and the republicans were trying to make capital out of it. According to them, it was political shame and remorse at having deserted his colours, despair at the turn events were taking, that prompted the step. These falsehoods have been repeated until they became legends connected with the fall of the Second Empire. To the majority of Englishmen, Prévost-Paradol is not even a name; talented as he was, Frenchmen would have scarcely known more about him if some politicians, for purposes of their own, had not chosen to convert him into a self-immolated martyr to the Imperialist cause—or, rather, to that part of the cause which aimed at the recovery of the left banks of the Rhine. I knew Prévost-Paradol, and he was only distinguished from hundreds

of thousands of Frenchmen in that his "France Nouvelle" was a magnificent attempt to spur his countrymen's ambition in that direction; but this very fact is an additional argument against the alleged cause of his self-destruction. He shot himself during the night of the 10th and 11th of July, when not the most pessimistically inclined could foresee the certainty of a war, and, least of all, the disastrous result of it to France. Those who would know the real cause of Prévost-Paradol's suicide had better read a short tale that appeared anonymously in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of February, 1860. The hero of "Madame de Marçay" is none other than the brilliant journalist himself, and the germs of suicidal mania were so plainly discernible in him, as to make those who knew the writer wonder that he had not killed himself long before he did.

I have already said that the excitement did not abate, but the more serious-minded began to look critical, and, among the latter, curiously enough, there were a good many superior officers in the army. They were too loyal to express openly their want of confidence in their leaders, but it was evident enough to the careful listener that that want of confidence did exist. I had a conversation during that week with one of the former, whose name, for obvious reasons, I must suppress; and this is, as far as I can remember, what he said, knowing that he could trust me. "There is not a single properly drawn ordnance map of France at the War Office; and if there were, there is not a single man in power there who would know how to use it. I doubt whether there is a settled plan of campaign; they'll endeavour to conduct this war as they conducted

the Crimean, Italian, and Mexican wars—that is, on the principle which stood them in such good stead in Algeria, though they ought to know by this time how very risky those experiments turned out, especially in '59; and I have no need to tell you that we are going to confront a different army from that of the Austrians or the Russians, Todleben notwithstanding. The African school of warfare ought to be played out by now, but it is not. To a certain extent, the Emperor is to blame for this. You remember what his uncle said: 'There is not a single general of whose draught I am not aware. Some will go up to their waists; others up to their necks; others, again, to over their heads; but the latter number is infinitely small, I assure you.' The Emperor is not in the same position with regard to the capacity of his generals, let alone of his officers."

"But he ought to be," I objected; "he interviews a great many of them on Sunday mornings." I was alluding to the informal levée held at the Tuileries every week, to which the generals and the general officers by sea and by land were admitted.

"You are right—he ought to be," was the answer; "and if a great deal of conscientious trouble on his part could have put him in possession of such knowledge, he would have had it by this time. Of course, you have never been present at such a reception; for all civilians, with the exception of a few ministers, are rigorously excluded. I repeat, the intention is a good one, but it is not carried out properly. The very fact that at the outset it met with the most strenuous opposition from nearly all the ministers and high dignitaries of the Imperial household ought to have

shown his Majesty the necessity of interviewing these officers alone, without as much as a chambellan in waiting. As it is, do you know what happens? I will tell you. The Emperor passes before these officers as they are standing around the room, stops before nearly every one to ask a question, inviting him, at the same time, to lodge a protest if necessary against any standing abuse or to suggest a measure of reform. But the chambellan is close at his heels; the minister for war, the marshal commanding the Imperial Guard, the military governor of Paris, are standing but a few steps away. The officer to whom the question is addressed feels himself tongue-tied; he knows that all these can hear every word he says, and, rather than be marked by his superiors as a tiresome meddler, he prefers to hold his tongue altogether—that is, if he be comparatively honest. Call it cowardice if you like, but most men will tell you that such cowardice exists in all administrations whether civil or military. Consequently, the Emperor, though he may know a good many officers by name and by sight, in reality knows nothing of their capacities. I may safely say that, for the last fifteen or sixteen years, there have not been a dozen important promotions, either in the army or the navy, justified by the ‘record of service’ of the officer promoted. Divisions—nay, whole army corps—have been confided to men who, in the hour of need, will, no doubt, prove very dashing and very plucky, but who have no more notion of handling large masses of men than an ordinary drill-sergeant. To use a more striking metaphor—they have selected the most desperate punters at baccarat to work out complicated chess problems. What the result will be with such a

champion as Von Moltke, Heaven alone knows. There are men at the head of our cavalry forces who can scarcely hold themselves on horseback; there are others commanding divisions and even corps-d'armée who know all about bridges, pontoons, artillery, and so forth, but who could no more execute a regularly organized retreat or advance than a child. The theory is that their dash and courage, their reckless, happy-go-lucky, but frequently successful African system, will make up for their ignorance of tactics and strategy. Naturally this is an implied rather than an expressed opinion, for many of those favourites believe themselves to be the equals in these latter sciences of Jomini and Napoleon, perhaps of Moltke also. Do not misunderstand me; there are a number of officers in the French army who have made a careful study of the science of war, and who, in that respect, would favourably compare with an equal number of the best instructed German officers, but they have by this time resigned themselves to keep in the background, because any attempt on their part to raise the standard of military knowledge has for years been systematically discountenanced by those nearest to the throne. On the other hand, the men thus kept at arm's length have not been altogether satisfied to suffer in silence. I do not mean to say that they have given vent to their grievances openly; they have done worse, perhaps, from the point of view of maintaining the discipline of the army. They have adopted a semi-critical, semi-hostile attitude towards their superiors. 'The officers' mess, such as it exists in England, is virtually unknown on the Continent, and least of all in France. The unmarried officer takes his daily meals at the table d'hôte

of an hotel, and he does talk 'shop' now and then in the presence of civilians. The criticisms he utters do find their way to the barrack-room, so that by now the private has become sceptical with regard to the capabilities of the generals and marshals. The soldier who begins to question the fitness of his chiefs is like the priest who begins to question the infallibility of the pope; he is a danger to the institution to which he belongs."

In reality, my informant told me little that was new, though he perhaps did not suspect that I was so well informed. I had heard most of all this, and a great deal besides, from a connection of mine by marriage, whose strictures in the same direction came with additional force, seeing that he was a frequent and welcome guest at the Tuileries. He was a general officer, but, with a frankness that bordered on the cynical, maintained that but for his capital voice and skill at leading "the cotillon" he would probably have never risen beyond the rank of captain; "for there are a thousand captains that know a great deal more than I do, a couple of thousand that know as much as I do, and very few who know less, none of whom have ever been promoted, and never will be, unless they earn their promotion at the point of the sword." According to him, the "records of service" were not as much as looked into at the periods of general promotions. "A clever answer to one of the Emperor's questions, a handsome face and pleasing manners, are sufficient to establish a reputation at the Château. The ministers for war take particular care not to rectify those impulsive judgments of the Emperor and Empress, because they rightly think that

careful inquiries into the candidates' merits would hurt their own protégés, and those of their fellow-ministers. This happy-go-lucky system—for a system it has become—founded upon the most barefaced nepotism, is condoned, by those who ought to have opposed it with all their might and main at the very outset, on the theory that Frenchmen's courage is sure to make up in the end for all shortcomings, which theory in itself is a piece of impertinence, or at any rate of overweening conceit, seeing that it implies the absence of such courage in the officers of other nations. But there is something else. All these favourites are jealous of one another, and, mark my words, this jealousy will in this instance lead to disastrous results, because the Emperor will find it as difficult to comply with as to refuse their individual extravagant demands. The time is gone by for radical reforms. 'You cannot swop horses while crossing a stream,' said Abraham Lincoln; and we are crossing a dangerous stream. The Emperor has, besides, a horror of new faces around him, and to extirpate the evil radically he would have to make a clean sweep of his military household."

I must preface the following notes by a personal remark. For private reasons, which I cannot and must not mention, I have decided not to put my name to these jottings, whether they are published before or after my death. I am aware that by doing this I diminish their value; because, although I never played a political or even a social part in France, I am sufficiently well known to inspire the reader with confidence. As it is, he must take it for granted that I was probably the only foreigner whom Frenchmen had agreed not to consider an enemy in disguise,

While my relative was giving me the above resumé, I was already aware that there existed in the French War Office a scheme of mobilization and a plan of campaign elaborated by Marshal Niel, the immediate predecessor of Marshal Lebœuf. I knew, moreover, that this plan provided for the formation of three armies, under the respective commands of Marshals MacMahon, Bazaine, and Canrobert, and that the disposition of these three armies had been the basis of negotiations for a Franco-Austrian alliance which had been started six weeks previous to the declaration of war by General Lebrun in Vienna. Up till the 22nd or 23rd of July the preparations were carried out in accordance with that original project; the respective staffs that had been appointed, the various regiments and brigades distributed long ago, were already hurrying to the front, when all of a sudden the whole of this plan was modified; the three armies were to be fused into one, to be called "l'armée du Rhin," under the sole and exclusive command of the Emperor.

Whence this sudden change? The historians, with their usual contempt for small causes, have endeavoured to explain it in various ways. According to some, the change was decided upon in order to afford the Emperor the opportunity of distinguishing himself; the "armée du Rhin" was to revive the glories of the "grande armée;" there was to be a second edition of the Napoleonic epic. After the first startling successes, the Emperor was to return to the capital, and Marshal Niel's plan was, if practicable, to be taken up once more,—that is, the French troops, having established a foothold in the enemy's country, were to be divided again under so many Klebers, Soults, and Neys.

According to others, the Emperor, who until then had been living in a fool's paradise with regard to the quantity, if not with regard to the quality, of the forces at his disposal, suddenly had his eyes opened to the real state of affairs. The six hundred and fifty thousand troops supposed to be at his disposal had their existence mainly on paper: the available reality did not amount to more than a third; *i.e.* to about two hundred and fifteen thousand troops of all arms.

The facts advanced by these historians are true, but they did not determine the change referred to—at any rate, not so far as the assumption of the supreme command by the Emperor himself was concerned. Anxious as the latter may have been, in the interest of his dynasty, to reap the glory of one or two successful battles fought under his immediate supervision, he was fully aware of his unfitness for such a task, especially in his actual state of health. Louis-Napoleon believed in his star, but he was not an idiot who counted upon luck to decide the fate of battles. If he had ever fostered such illusions, the campaign of 1859 must have given a rude shock to them, for there he was, more than once, within an ace of defeat; and no one knew this better than he did. The fusing of the three armies into one was due, first, to the difficulty, if not impossibility, of constituting three armies with considerably less than three hundred thousand troops; secondly, to the inveterate jealousy of his marshals of one another. Napoleon feared, and justly, that if those three armies went forth under three separate commands, there would be a repetition of the quarrels that had occurred during the Austro-Franco war, when Niel accused Canrobert

of not having properly supported him at the right time, and so forth. It will be remembered that the Emperor himself had to intervene to heal those quarrels. Under those circumstances, the Emperor thought it better to risk it, and to take the whole responsibility upon himself.

The Emperor left St. Cloud on the 28th of July. It is very certain that, even before his departure, his confidence in the late Marshal Niel as an organizer must have been considerably shaken, and that the words of Lebœuf, "We are ready, more than ready," sounded already a hollow mockery to his ear. Here are some of the telegrams which, after the 4th of September, were found among the papers at the Tuileries. They were probably copies of the originals, though I am by no means certain that they were forwarded to St. Cloud at the time of their reception. It would have been better, perhaps, if they had been.

"Metz, 20 July, 1870, 9.50 a.m. From Chief of Commissariat Department to General Blondeau, War Office, Paris. There is at Metz neither sugar, coffee, rice, brandy, nor salt. We have but little bacon and biscuit. Despatch, at least, a million rations to Thionville."

"General Ducrot to War Office, Paris. Strasburg, 20 July, 1870, 8.30 p.m. By to-morrow there will be scarcely fifty men left to guard Neuf-Brisach; Fort-Mortier, Schlestadt, la Petite-Pierre, and Lichtenberg are equally deserted. It is the result of the orders we are carrying out. The Garde Mobile and local National Guards might easily be made available for garrison duty, but I am reluctant to adopt such measures, seeing that your excellency has granted

me no power to that effect. It appears certain that the Prussians are already masters of all the passes of the Black Forest."

"From the General commanding the 2nd Army Corps to War Office, Paris. Saint-Avoid, 21 July, 1870, 8.55 a.m. The dépôt sends enormous parcels of maps, which are absolutely useless for the moment. We have not a single map of the French frontier. It would be better to send greater quantities of what would be more useful, and which are absolutely wanting at this moment."

"From General Michael to War Office, Paris. Belfort, 21 July, 1870, 7.30 a.m. Have arrived at Belfort; did not find my brigade, did not find a general of division. What am I to do? Do not know where are my regiments."

"From General commanding 4th Army Corps to Major-General, Paris. Thionville, 21 July, 9.12 a.m. The 4th Corps has as yet neither canteens, ambulances, nor baggage-waggons, either for the troops or the staff. There is an utter lack of everything."

I need quote no further; there were about two hundred missives in all, all dated within the week following the official declaration of war. It would be difficult to determine how many of these the Emperor was permitted to see, but there is no doubt that he had a pretty correct idea of the state of affairs, for here is a fact which I have not seen stated anywhere, but for the truth of which I can vouch. For full two years before the outbreak of hostilities, the Legislature seemed bent upon advocating all kind of retrenchment in the war budget. During the first six months of 1870, the thing had almost become a

mania with them, and the Emperor appealed to M. Thiers, through the intermediary of Marshal Lebœuf himself, to help him stem the tide of this pseudo-economy. Thiers promised his support, and faithfully kept his word; but his aid came too late. The Emperor, however, felt grateful to him, and, only thirty-six hours before his departure for the seat of war, he offered him the portfolio of war, again through the intermediary of Marshal Lebœuf. The offer was respectfully declined, but what must have been the state of mind of Louis-Napoléon with regard to his officers, to prefer to them a civilian at such a critical moment? I may state here that it was always the height of M. Thiers' ambition to be considered a great strategist and tactician, and also a military engineer. "Jomini was a civilian," he frequently exclaimed. Those who were competent to judge, have often declared that Thiers' pretensions in that direction were, to a certain extent, justified by his talents. Curiously enough, M. de Freycinet is affected by a similar mania.

Here is a certain correlative to the above-mentioned fact. When, a few months after the Commune, things were getting ship-shape in Paris, a large bundle of printed matter was unearthed in the erstwhile Imperial (then National) Printing Works. It contained, amongst others, a circular drawn up by the Emperor himself, entitled "A Bad Piece of Economy;" it was addressed to the deputies, and dated May, 1870; it showed the presumptive strength of the army of the North-German Confederation as compared with that of France, and wound up with the following sentence: "If we compare the military condition of North-Germany with ours, we shall be able to judge how far those

who would still further reduce our national forces are sufficiently enlightened as to our real interests."

It has always been a mystery to me, and to those who were aware of its existence, why this circular was not distributed at the proper time; though, by the light of subsequent events, one fails to see what good it could have done then. Were these events foreseen at the Tuileries as early as May? I think not. The majority of the Emperor's entourage were confident that war with Germany was only a matter of time; very few considered it to be so imminent. One cannot for a moment imagine that the suppression of this circular was due to accidental or premeditated neglect; for the sovereign, though ailing and low-spirited, was still too mindful of his prerogatives not to have visited such neglect of his wishes, whether intentional or not, with severe displeasure. Nor can one for a moment admit that the Emperor was hoodwinked into the belief that the circular had been distributed. His so-called advisers probably prevailed upon him to forego the distribution of the document, lest it should open the eyes of the nation to the inferiority of France's armaments. The only man who had dared to point out that inferiority, three years previously, was General Trochu, and his book, "*l'Armée Française*," had the effect of ostracizing him from the Tuileries. The smart and swaggering colonels who surrounded the Empress did not scruple to spread the most ridiculous slanders with regard to its author; but the Emperor, though aware that Trochu was systematically opposed to his dynasty, also knew that he was an able, perhaps the ablest soldier in the country. The subsequent failure of

Trochu does not invalidate that judgment. "I know what Trochu could and would do if he were unhampered; but I need not concern myself with that, seeing that he will be hampered," said Von Moltke at the beginning of the siege. Colonel Stoffel, the French military attaché at Berlin, was severely reprimanded by Marshal Niel and by Lebœuf afterwards for his constant endeavours to acquaint the Emperor with the magnificent state of efficiency of the Prussian army and its auxiliaries. Ostensibly, it was because he had been guilty of a breach of diplomatic and military etiquette; in reality, because the minister for war and his "festive" coadjutors objected to being constantly harassed in their pleasures by the sovereign's suspicions of their mental nakedness. "Nous l'avons eu, votre Rhin allemand. . . . Où le père a passé, passera bien l'enfant," was their credo; and they continued to dance, and to flirt, and to intrigue for places, which, in their hands, became fat sinecures. They would have laughed to scorn the dictum of the first Napoleon, that "there are no bad regiments, only bad colonels;" in their opinion, there were no bad colonels, except those perhaps who did not constantly jingle their spurs on the carpeted floors of the Empress's boudoir, and the parqueted arena of the Empress's ball-room. The Emperor was too much of a dreamer and a philosopher for them; he could not emancipate himself from his German education. The best thing to do was to let him write and print whatever he liked, and then prevail upon him at the last moment not to publish, lest it might offend national vanity. Contemptuous as they were of the German spirit of plodding, they had, nevertheless,

taken a leaf from an eminent German's book. "Let them say and write what they like, as long as they let me do what I like," exclaimed Frederick the Great, on one occasion. They slightly reversed the sentence. "Let the Emperor say and write what he likes, as long as he lets us do what we like; and one thing we will take care to do, namely, not to let him publish his writings." They had forgotten, if ever they knew them—for their ignorance was as startling as their conceit—the magnificent lines of the founder of the dynasty which they had systematically undermined for years by their dissipation, frivolity, and corruption: "The general is the head, the all in all of the army. It was not the Roman army that conquered Gaul, but Cæsar; it was not the Carthaginian army that made the republican army tremble at the very gates of Rome, but Hannibal; it was not the Macedonian army that penetrated to the Indus, but Alexander; it was not the French army which carried the war as far as the Weser and the Inn, but Turenne; it was not the Prussian army which defended, during seven years, Prussia against the three greatest powers in Europe, but Frederick the Great."

And she who aspired to play the rôle of a Maria-Theresa, when she was not even a Marie-Antoinette, and far more harmful than even a Marie-Louise, applauded the vapourings of those misguided men. "Le courage fait tout," had been the motto for nearly a score of years at the Tuileries. It did a good deal in the comedies à la Marivaux, in the Boccacian charades that had been enacted there during that time; she had yet to learn that it would avail little or nothing in the Homeric struggle which was impending.

CHAPTER X.

The war—Reaction before the Emperor's departure—The moral effects of the publication of the draft treaty—"Bismarck has done the Emperor"—The Parisians did not like the Empress—The latter always anxious to assume the regency—A retrospect—Crimean war—The Empress and Queen Victoria—Solferino—The regency of '65—Bismarck's millinery bills—Lord Lyons—Bismarck and the Duc de Gramont—Lord Lyons does not foresee war—The republicans and the war—The Empress—Two ministerial councils and their consequences—Mr. Prescott-Hewett sent for—Joseph Ferrari, the Italian philosopher—The Empress—The ferment in Paris—"Too much prologue to 'The Taming of the German Shrew'"—The first engagement—The "Marseillaise"—An infant performer—The "Marseillaise" at the Comédie-Française—The "Marseillaise" by command of the Emperor—A patriotic ballet—The courtesy of the French at Fontenoy—The Café de la Paix—General Beaufort d'Hautpoul and Moltke—Newspaper correspondents—Edmond About tells a story about one of his colleagues—News supplied by the Government—What it amounted to—The information it gave to the enemy—Bazaine, "the glorious" one—Palikao—The fall of the Empire does not date from Sedan, but from Wœrth and Spicheren—Those who dealt it the heaviest blow—The Empress, the Empress, and no one but the Empress.

EVEN before the Emperor started for the seat of war it was very evident, to those who kept their eyes open, that a reaction had set in among the better classes. They were no longer confident about France's ability to chastise the arrogance of the King of Prussia. The publication of the famous "draft treaty" had convinced them "*que Bismarck avait roulé l'empereur,*"—*anglicè*, "that the Emperor had been done;" and, notwithstanding their repeated assertions of being able to dispense with the moral support of Europe, they felt not altogether resigned about the animosity which the

revelation of that document had provoked. Honestly speaking, I do not think that they regretted the duplicity of Louis-Napoléon in having tried to steal a march upon the co-signatories of the treaty guaranteeing the protection of Belgium; but it wounded their pride that he should have been found out to no purpose. The word "imbécile" began to circulate freely; and when it became known that he had conferred the regency upon the Empress, the expression of contempt and disapproval became stronger still. In spite of everything that has been said to the contrary, the Parisians did not like the Empress. I have already noted elsewhere that those frankly hostile to her did not scruple to apply the word "l'Espagnole" in a depreciating sense; those whose animosity did not go so far merely considered her "une femme à la mode," and by no means fitted to take the reins of government, especially under circumstances so grave as the present ones. On the other hand, the Empress always showed herself exceedingly anxious to exercise the functions of regent. The flatterers and courtiers around her had imbued her with the idea that she was a kind of Elizabeth and a Catherine in one, and the clerical element in her entourage was not the least blamable in that respect.

During the Crimean war, Lord Clarendon had already been compelled to combat the project, though he could not do so openly. Napoleon III. had several times expressed his intention of taking the command of the army. His ministers, and especially MM. Troplong and Baroche, begged of him not to do so. Even Queen Victoria, to whom the idea was broached while on her visit to Paris, threw cold water

upon it as far as was possible. But the Empress encouraged it to her utmost. "I fail to see," she said to our sovereign, "that he would be exposed to greater dangers there than elsewhere." It was the prospect of the regency, not of the glory that might possibly accrue to her consort, that appealed to the Empress; for in reality she had not the least sympathy with the object of that war, any more than with that of 1859. Russia was ostensibly fighting for the custody of the Holy Sepulchre; and the defeat of Austria, she had been told by the priests, would entail the ruin of the temporal power of the pope. And Empress Eugénie never attained to anything more than parrot knowledge in the way of politics.

However, in 1859 she had her wish, and, before the opening of the campaign, she declared to the Corps Legislatif that "she had perfect faith in the moderation of the Emperor when the right moment for peace should have arrived." Her ladies-in-waiting and the male butterflies around her openly discounted the political effects of every engagement on the field of battle. The Emperor, according to them, would make peace with Austria with very few sacrifices on the latter's part, for it was a Conservative and Catholic power, which could not be humiliated to the bitter end, while Italy was, after all, but a hotbed of conspiracy, revolutionary, anti-Catholic, and so forth.

And I know, for a positive fact, that the Emperor was, as it were, compelled to suspend operations after Solferino, because the Minister for War had ceased to send troops and ammunitions "by order of the regent." The Minister for Foreign Affairs endeavoured by all means in his power to alarm his sovereign.

Nevertheless, in 1865, when he went to Algeria to seek some relief from his acute physical sufferings, Napoleon III. was badgered into confiding the regency once more to his wife. There is no other word, because there was no necessity for such a measure, seeing that he did not leave French territory. We have an inveterate habit of laughing at the "henpecked husband," and no essayist has been bold enough as yet to devote a chapter to him from a purely historical point of view. The materials are not only at hand in France, but in England, Germany, and Russia also; above all, in the latter country. He, the essayist, might safely leave Catherine de Medici out of the question. He need not go back as far. He might begin with Marie de Medici and her daughter, Henrietta-Maria. Sometimes the "henpecking" turns out to be for the world's benefit, as when Sophie-Dorothea worries her spouse to let her first boy wear a heavy christening dress and crown, which eventually kill the infant, who makes room for Frederick the Great. But one could have very well spared the servant-wench who henpecked Peter the Great, and Scarron's widow who henpecked Louis XIV., and Marie-Antoinette and the rest.

The regency of '65, though perhaps not disastrous in itself, was fraught with the most disastrous consequences for the future. It gave the Empress the political importance which she had been coveting for years; henceforth she made it a habit to be present at the councils of ministers, who in their turn informed her personally of events which ought to have remained strictly between them and the chief of the State. This went on until M. Emile Ollivier came into power,

January 2, 1870. † The Italian and Austrian ambassadors, however, continued to flatter her vanity by constantly appealing to her; the part they played on the 4th of September shows plainly enough how they profited in the interest of their governments by these seemingly diplomatic indiscretions on their own part.

As for Bismarck, as some one who was very much behind the political scenes in Berlin once said, "His policy consisted in paying milliners' and dressmakers' bills in Paris for ladies to whose personal adornment and appearance he was profoundly indifferent." I am bound to say that Lord Lyons courteously but steadfastly refused to be drawn out "diplomatically" by the Empress. While paying due homage to the woman and to the sovereign, he tacitly declined to consider her a pawn in the political game, and, though always extremely guarded in his language, could scarcely refrain from showing his contempt for those who did. I do not know whether Lord Lyons will leave behind any "memoirs;" if he do, we shall probably get not only nothing but the truth, but the whole truth, with regard to the share of the Empress in determining the war; and we shall find that that war was not decided upon between the Imperial couple between the 14th and 15th of July, '70, but between the 5th and 6th of July. Meanwhile, without presuming to anticipate such revelations on the part of our ambassador, I may note here my own recollections on the subject.

On Tuesday, the 5th of July, about 2.30 p.m., I was walking along the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, when, just in front of the Embassy, I was brought to a standstill by Lord Lyons' carriage turning into the courtyard

from the street. His lordship was inside. We were on very good terms, I may say on very friendly terms, and he beckoned me to come in. I was at the short flight of steps leading to the hall almost as soon as the carriage, and we went inside together. I do not suppose I was in his private room for more than ten minutes, but I brought away the impression that, although the Duc de Gramont and M. Emile Ollivier might think it necessary to adopt a bellicose tone in face of the Hohenzollern candidature, there was little or no fear of war, because the Emperor was *decidedly* inclined to peace. I remember this the more distinctly, seeing that Lord Lyons told me that he had just returned from an interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs. I am not certain of the exact words used by his lordship, but positive as to the drift of one of his remarks; namely, that the Duc de Gramont was the last person who ought to conduct the negotiations. "There is too much personal animosity between him and Bismarck, owing mainly to the latter having laughed his pretensions to scorn as a diplomatist while the duke was at Vienna." I am certain the words were to that effect. Then he added, "I can understand though I fail to approve De Gramont's personal irritation, but cannot account for Ollivier's, and he seems as pugnacious as the other. Nevertheless, I repeat, the whole of this will blow over: William is too wise a man to go to war on such a pretext, and the Emperor is too ill not to want peace. I wish the Empress would leave him alone. I am going to Ollivier's to-night, and I'll know more about it by to-morrow morning."

It is very evident from this that the historians were

subsequently wrongly informed as to M. Emile Ollivier's attitude at that moment, which they have described as exactly the reverse from what Lord Lyons found it. I knew little or nothing of M. Ollivier, still he did not give me the impression of being likely to adopt a hectoring tone just in order to please the gallery, the gallery being in this instance the clientèle of the opposition, whom the Emperor feared more than any one else. From all I have been able to gather since, Louis-Napoléon seemed racked with anxiety, but, as one of my informants, who was scarcely away from his side at the time, said afterwards, he was not pondering over the consequences of war which he fancied he was able to prevent, he was pondering the consequences of peace. Translated into plain language, it meant that the republican minority, with its recent accession of representatives in the chambers and its still more unscrupulous adherents outside, were striving with might and main, not to goad the Emperor into a war, but to make him keep a peace which, if they had had the chance, they would have denounced as humiliating to France.

Unfortunately for France, they found an unexpected ally in the Empress. The latter urged on the war with Prussia, in order to secure to her son the imperial crown which was shaking on the head of her husband; the former were playing the game known colloquially as "Heads, I win; tails, you lose." Peace preserved by means of diplomatic negotiations would give them the opportunity of holding up the Empire to scorn as being too weak to safeguard the national honour; war would give them the opportunity of airing their platitudes about the iniquity of standing armies and the

sacrifice of human life, etc. I go further still, and unhesitatingly affirm that, if any party was aware of the corruption in the army, it was the republican one. The plébiscite of May, with its thousands of votes adverse to the Imperial régime—among which votes there were those of a great many officers—had not only given them a chance of counting their numbers, but of obtaining information, not available to their adversaries in power. This is tantamount to an indictment of having deliberately contributed to the temporary ruin of their country for political purposes, and such I intend it to be. I am not speaking without good grounds.

On the day I met Lord Lyons, two ministerial councils were held at Saint-Cloud, both presided over by the Emperor. Between the first and the second, the peaceful sentiments of the chief of the State underwent no change. So little did the Emperor foresee or desire war, that on the evening of that same day, while the second council of ministers was being held, he sent one of his aides-de-camp to my house for the exact address of Mr. Prescott-Hewett, the eminent English surgeon. I was not at home, and on my return, an hour later, sent the address by telegraph to Saint-Cloud. I have since learnt that, on the same night, a telegram was despatched to London, inquiring of Mr. Hewett when it would be convenient for him to hold a consultation in Paris. An appointment was made, but Mr. Hewett eventually went in August, to the seat of war, to see his illustrious patient. I believe, but am not certain, that he saw him at Châlons.

On the 6th of July, there was a third council of ministers at Saint-Cloud, at ten o'clock in the morning,

in order to draw up the answer to M. Cochery's interpellation on the Hohenzollern candidature. The latter was supposed to have been inspired by M. Thiers, but I will only state what I know positively with regard to the Emperor. At a little after two that afternoon, I happened to be at the Café de la Paix, when my old friend, Joseph Ferrari, came up to me.* He was a great friend of Adolphe and Elysée, the brothers of Emile Ollivier. He looked positively crestfallen, and, knowing him to be a sincere advocate of peace, I had no need to ask him for the nature of the news he brought. I could see at a glance that it was bad. He, however, left me no time to put a question.

"It's all over," he said at once, "and, unless a miracle happens, we'll have war in less than a fortnight." He immediately went on. "Wait for another hour, and then you'll see the effect of De Gramont's answer to Cochery's interpellation in the Chamber. Not only the Prussians, but the smallest nation in Europe would not stand it."

"But," I remarked, "about this time yesterday I was positively assured, and on the best authority, that the Emperor was absolutely opposed to any but a pacific remonstrance."

"Your informant was perfectly correct," was the answer; "and as late as ten o'clock last night, at the termination of the second council of ministers, his sentiments underwent no change. Immediately after that, the Empress had a conversation with the Emperor, which I know for certain lasted till one o'clock in the

* Joseph Ferrari was an Italian by birth, but spent a great part of his time in France. He is best known by his "*Philosophes Salariés*," and died in Rome, 1876.—EDITOR.

morning. The result of this conversation is the answer, the text of which you will see directly, and which is tantamount to a challenge to Prussia. Mark my words, the Empress will not cease from troubling until she has driven France into a war with the only great Protestant power on the Continent. That power defeated, she will endeavour to destroy the rising unity of Italy. She little knows that Victor-Emanuel will not wait until then, and that, at the first success of the French on the Rhine, he will cross the Alps at a sign of Prussia; that at the first success of Prussia, the Italian troops will start on their march to Rome. Nay, I repeat, it is the Empress who will prove the ruin of France."

That playful cry of the Empress, which she was so fond of uttering in the beginning of her married life, "As for myself, I am a Legitimist," without understanding, or endeavouring to understand its import, had gradually grafted itself on her mind, although it had ceased to be on her lips. Impatient of contradiction, self-willed and tyrannical, both by nature and training, her sudden and marvellous elevation to one of the proudest positions in Europe could not fail to strengthen those defects of character. Superstitious, like most Spaniards, she was firmly convinced that the gipsy who foretold her future greatness was a Divine messenger, and from that to the conviction that she occupied the throne by a right as Divine as that claimed by the Bourbons there was but one short step. A corollary to Divine right meant, to her, personal and irresponsible government. That was her idea of legitimism. Though by no means endowed with high intellectual gifts, she perceived well enough, in the

beginning, that the Second Empire was not a very stable edifice, either with regard to its foundations or superstructure, and, until England propped it up by an alliance, and a State visit from our sovereign, she kept commendably coy. But from that moment she aspired to be something more than the arbiter of fashion. As I have already said, she failed in prevailing upon the Emperor to go to the Crimea. In '59 she was more successful, in '65 she was more successful still. In the former year, she laid the foundation of what was called the Empress's party; in the latter, the scaffolding was removed from the structure, henceforth the work was done inside. She, no more than her surroundings, had the remotest idea that France was gradually undergoing a political change, that she was recovering her constitutional rights. Her party was like the hare in the fable that used the wrong end of the opera-glass, and lived in a fool's paradise with regard to the distance that divided them from the sportsman, until he was fairly upon them, in the shape of the liberal ministry of the 2nd of January, 1870.

M. Emile Ollivier, to his credit be it said, refused to be guided by his predecessors. He studiously avoided informing the Empress of the affairs of State, let alone discussing them with her. Apart from the small fry of the Imperial party, he made two powerful enemies—the Empress herself, and Rouher, who saw in this refusal to follow precedent an implied censure upon himself. Rouher, I repeat once more, was honest to the backbone, but fond of personal power. The Empire to him meant nothing but the Emperor, the Empress, and the heir to the throne; just as Germany meant nothing to Bismarck but the Hohenzollern

dynasty. He was one of the first to proclaim, loudly and openly, that the plébiscite of the 8th of May meant an overwhelming manifestation, not in favour of the liberal Empire, but in favour of the Emperor; and when the latter, to do him justice, declined to look at it in that light, he deserted him for the side of his wife. It is an open secret that the first use the Empress meant to make of her power as regent, after the first signal victory of French arms, was to sweep away the cabinet of the 2nd of January. The Imperial decree conferring the regency upon her, "during the absence of the Emperor at the head of his army," and dated the 22nd of July, invested her with very limited power.

Meanwhile, pending the departure of the Emperor, Paris was in a ferment, but, to the careful observer, it was no longer the unalloyed enthusiasm of the first few days. There were just as many people in the streets; the shouts of "À Berlin!" though, perhaps, not so sustained, were just as loud every now and then; the troops leaving for the front received tremendous orations, and more substantial proofs of the people's goodwill; the man who dared to pronounce the word "peace" ran a great risk of being rent to pieces by the crowds—a thing which almost happened one night in front of the Café de Madrid, on the Boulevard Montmartre: still, the enthusiasm was not the same. "There seems to be a great deal of prologue to 'The Taming of that German Shrew,'" said a French friend, who was pretty familiar with Shakespeare; and he was not far wrong, for the Christophers Sly abounded. The bivouacs of the troops about to take their departure reminded one somewhat more forcibly of

operatic scenes and equestrian dramas of the circus type than of the preparations for the stern necessities of war—with this difference, that the contents of the goblet were real, and the viands not made of cardboard. "They are like badly made cannons, these soldiers," said some one else: "they are crammed up to the muzzle, and they do not go off." In short, the more sensible of the Paris population began to conclude that a little less intoning of patriotic strophes and a good deal more of juxtaposition with the German troops was becoming advisable. The reports of the few preliminary skirmishes that had taken place were no doubt favourable to the French; at the same time, there was no denying the fact that they had taken place on French and not on German territory, which was not quite in accordance with the spirit of the oft-repeated cry of "À Berlin!" In accordance with the programme of which that cry was the initial quotation, the French ought, by this time, to have been already half on their way to the Prussian capital. That is what sensible, nay, clever people expressed openly. Nevertheless, the cry continued, nor was there any escape from the "Marseillaise," either by day or night. Every now and then, a more than usually dense group might be seen at a street corner. The centre of the group was composed of a woman, with a baby in her arms; the little one could scarcely speak, but its tiny voice reproduced more or less accurately the air of the "Marseillaise:" a deep silence prevailed during the performance in order to give the infant a fair chance; deafening applause greeted the termination of the solo, and a shower of coppers fell into the real or pseudo mother's lap. On the 18th of July, the day

of the official declaration of war in Paris, the Comédie-Française performed "Le Lion Amoureux" of Ponsard.* At the end of the second act, the public clamoured for the "Marseillaise." There was not a single member of the company capable of complying with the request, so the "stage manager for the week" had to come forward and ask for a two-days' adjournment, during which some one might study it. Of course, *the honour* of singing the revolutionary hymn was to devolve upon a woman, according to the precedent established in '48, when Rachel had intoned it. From what I learnt a few days afterwards, the candidates for the *distinguished task* were not many, in spite of the tacit consent of the Government. The ladies of the company, most of whom, like their fellow-actors, had been always very cordially treated by the Emperor on the occasion of their professional visits to Saint-Cloud, Compiègne, and Fontainebleau, instinctively guessed the pain the concession must have caused the chief of the State, and under some pretext declined. Mdlle. Agar accepted, and sang the "Marseillaise," in all forty-four times, from the 20th of July to the 17th of September, the day of the final investment of the capital by the German armies.

It must not be supposed, though, that the Government had waited until the day of the official declaration of war to sanction the performance of the "Marseillaise" in places of public resort. I remember crossing the Gardens of the Tuileries in the afternoon of Sunday, the 17th of July. One of the military bands was performing a selection of music. The custom of doing so

* I believe there exists an English version of the play, entitled "A Son of the Soil." I am not certain of the title.—EDITOR.

during the summer months has prevailed for many years, both in the capital and in the principal garrison towns of the provinces. All at once they struck up the "Marseillaise." I looked in surprise at my companion, a member of the Emperor's household. He caught the drift of my look.

"It is by the Emperor's express command," he said. "It is the national war-song. In fact, it is that much more than a revolutionary hymn."

"But war has not been declared," I objected.

"It will be to-morrow," was the answer.

The public, which in this instance was mainly composed of the better classes, apparently refused to consider the "Marseillaise" a national war-song, and applause at its termination was but very lukewarm.

I have already spoken of the scene I witnessed in connection with the departure of the Germans on that same Sunday early in the morning, and have also noted the demonstration in front of the German Embassy on the previous Friday night. I will not be equally positive with regard to the exact dates of the succeeding exhibitions of bad taste on the part of the Parisians, but I remember a very striking one which happened between the official declaration of war and the end of July. It was brought under my notice, not by a foreigner, but by a Frenchman, who was absolutely disgusted with it. We were sitting one evening outside the Café de la Paix, which, being the resort of some noted Imperialists, I had begun to visit more frequently than I had done hitherto. There was a terrible din on the Boulevards: the evening papers had just published a very circumstantial account of that insignificant skirmish which cost

Lieutenant Winslow his life, and in which the French had taken a couple of prisoners. "They" (the prisoners), suggested an able editor, "ought to be brought to Paris and publicly exhibited as an example." "And, what is more," said my friend who had read the paragraph to me, "he means what he says. These are the descendants of a nation who prides herself on having said at Fontenoy, 'Messieurs les Anglais tirez les premiers,' which, by-the-by, they did not say.* If you care to come with me, I'll show you what would be the probable fate of such prisoners if the writer of that paragraph had his will."

So said; so done. In about a quarter of an hour we were seated at the Café de l'Horloge, in the Champs Elysées, and my friend was holding out five francs fifty centimes in payment for two small glasses of so-called "Fine Champagne," *plus* the waiter's tip. The admission was gratis; and the difference between those who went in and those who remained outside was that the latter could hear the whole of the performance without seeing it, and without disbursing a

* It was, in fact, an English officer who shouted, "Messieurs des gardes françaises, tirez;" to which the French replied, "Messieurs, nous ne tirons jamais les premiers; tirez vous mêmes." But it was not politeness that dictated the reply; it was the expression of the acknowledged and constantly inculcated doctrine that all infantry troops which fired the first were indubitably beaten. We find the doctrine clearly stated in the infantry instructions of 1672, and subsequently in the following order of Louis XIV. to his troops: "The soldier shall be taught not to fire the first, and to stand the fire of the enemy, seeing that an enemy who has fired is assuredly beaten when his adversary has his powder left." At the battle of Dettingen, consequently, two years before Fontenoy, the theory had been carried *beyond* the absurd by expressly forbidding the Gardes to fire, though they were raked down by the enemy's bullets. Maurice de Saxe makes it a point to praise the wisdom of a colonel who, in order to prevent his troops from firing, constantly made them shoulder their muskets.—
EDITOR.

farthing; while the former could see the whole of the performance without hearing a note, for the din there was also infernal. Shortly after our arrival, the band struck up the inevitable "Marseillaise," but the audience neither listened nor applauded.

This was, after all, but the overture to the entertainment to which my friend had invited me, and which consisted of a spectacular pantomime representing an engagement between a regiment or a battalion of Zouaves and Germans. As a matter of course, the latter had the worst of it; and, at the termination, a couple of them were brought in and compelled to sue for mercy on their knees. I am bound to say that the thing hung fire altogether, and that, but for the remarkable selection of handsome legs of the Zouaves, not even the harebrained young fellows with which the audience was largely besprinkled would have paid any attention.

In the whole of Paris there was no surer centre of information of the state of affairs at the front than the Café de la Paix. It was the principal resort of the Bonapartists. There were Pietri, the prefect of police, Sampierro, Abatucci, and a score or two of others; all cultivating excellent relations with the Château. There was also the General Beaufort d'Hautpoul, to whom Bismarck subsequently, through the pen of Dr. Moritz Busch, did the greatest injury a man can do to a soldier, in accusing him of drunkenness when he came to settle some of the military conditions of the armistice at Versailles. He was, as far as I remember, one of the two superior French officers who estimated at its true value the strategic genius of Von Moltke. The other was Colonel Stoffel. But General d'Hautpoul was

even better enabled to judge; he had seen Moltke at work in Syria more than thirty years before. He was in reality the Solomon Eagle of the campaign, before a single shot had been fired. "I know our army, and I know Helmuth von Moltke," he said, shaking his head despondingly. "If every one of our officers were his equal in strategy, the chance would then only be equal. Moltke has the gift of the great billiard-player; he knows beforehand the exact results of a shock between two bodies at a certain angle. We are a doomed nation."

As a matter of course, his friends were very wroth at what they called "his unpatriotic language," and when the news of the engagement at Saarbruck arrived they crowded over him; but he stuck to his text. "It is simply a feint on Moltke's part, and proves nothing at all. In two or three days we'll get the news of a battle that will decide, not only the fate of the whole campaign, but the fate of the Empire also."

Two days afterwards, I met him near the Rue Saint-Florentin; he looked absolutely crestfallen. "We have suffered a terrible defeat near Wissembourg, but do not breathe a word of it to any one. The Government is waiting for a victory on some other point, and then it will publish the two accounts together."

The Government was reckoning without the newspapers, French and foreign. The latter might be confiscated, and in fact were, such as the *Times* and *l'Indépendance Belge*; but the French, notwithstanding the temporary law of M. Emile Ollivier, were more difficult to deal with. I am inclined to think that if they had foreseen the terrible fate that was to befall the French armies they would have been more amenable, but in

the beginning they anticipated nothing but startling victories, and, as such, looked upon the campaign in the light of a series of brilliant spectacular performances, glowing accounts of which were essentially calculated to increase their circulation. When MM. Cardon and Chabrilat, respectively of the *Gaulois* and *Figaro*, were released by the Prussians, they told many amusing stories to that effect, unconsciously confirming the opinion I have already expressed; but the following, which I had from the lips of Edmond About himself, is better than any I can remember.

A correspondent of one of the best Paris newspapers, on his arrival at the head-quarters of "the army of the Rhine," applied to the aide-major-general for permission to follow the operations. He had a good many credentials of more or less weight; nevertheless the aide-major-general, in view of the formal orders of the Emperor and Marshal Lebœuf, felt bound to refuse the request. The journalist, on the other hand, declined to take "no" for an answer. "I have come with the decided intention to do justice, and more than justice perhaps, to your talent and courage, and it would be a pity indeed if I were not given the opportunity," he said.

"I am very sorry," was the reply; "but I cannot depart from the rules for any one."

"But our paper has a very large circulation."

"All the more reason to refuse you the authorization to follow the staff."

The journalist would not look at matters in that light. He felt that he was conferring a favour, just as he would have felt in offering the advantage of a cleverly written puff of a première to a theatrical

manager. Seeing that his arguments were of no avail, he delivered his parting shot.

"This, then, general, is your final decision. I am afraid you'll have cause to regret this, for we, on our side, are determined not to give this war the benefit of publicity in our columns."

M. Emile Ollivier's original decision was the right one, but, instead of embodying it in a temporary and exceptional order, he ought to have made it a permanent law in times of peace as well as war. On Saturday, the 16th of July, Count Culemburg, the Prussian Minister of the Interior, addressed a circular to the German papers, recommending them to abstain from giving any news, however insignificant, with regard to the movements of the troops. As far as I remember, the German editors neither protested, nor endeavoured to shirk the order; they raised no outcry against "the muzzling of the press." Five days later, the French minister was attacked by nearly every paper in France for attempting to do a similar thing, and, rather than weather that storm in a teacup, he consented to a compromise, and condescended to ask where he might have commanded. In addition to this, he undertook that the Government itself should be the purveyor of war-news to the papers. Every editor of standing in Paris knew that this meant garbled, if not altogether mythical, accounts of events, and that even these would be held back until they could be held back no longer. In a few days their worst apprehensions in that respect were confirmed. While Paris was still ignorant of the terrible disaster at Wissembourg, the whole of Europe rang with the tidings. Then came the false report of a brilliant victory from the Govern-

ment agency. It made the Parisians frantic with joy, but the frenzy changed into one of anger when the truth became known through the maudlin and lachrymose despatches from the Imperial head-quarters, albeit that they by no means revealed the whole extent of the defeats suffered at Woerth and Spichenen.

Nevertheless, the *agency* continued the even—or rather uneven—tenor of its way up to the last. The Republicans subsequently adopted the tactics of the Imperial Government, the Communists adhered to the system of those they had temporarily ousted. In the present note, I will deal only with events up to the 4th of September. Patent as it must have been to the merest civilian, that the commanders were simply committing blunder after blunder, the movements of Bazaine were represented by the *agency* as the result of a masterly and profound calculation. Even such a pessimist as General Beaufort d'Hautpoul was taken in by those representations. He considered the "masterly inactivity" of Bazaine as an inspiration of genius. "He is keeping two hundred thousand German troops round Metz," he said several times. "These two hundred thousand men are rendered absolutely useless while we are recruiting our armies and reorganizing our forces." He seemed altogether oblivious of the fact that these two hundred thousand Germans were virtually the gaolers of France's best army.

I am unable to say whether General d'Hautpoul was in direct or indirect communication with the *agency*, or whether some ingenious scribe belonging to it had overheard his expressions of admiration and wilfully adopted them; certain is it that the *agency* was the first to inspire the reporters of those papers

who took their cue from it with the flattering epithet of "glorious Bazaine."

It was the same with regard to Palikao. His sententious commonplaces were reported as so many oracular revelations dragged reluctantly from him. Had they been more familiar with Shakespeare than they were, or are, the scribes would have made Palikao exclaim with Macbeth, "The greatest is behind." And all the while the troops were marching and countermarching at haphazard, without a preconceived plan, jeering at their leaders and openly insulting the "phantom" Emperor, as they did at Châlons, for he was already no more than that. The fall of the Empire does not date from Sedan, but from Woerth and Spicheren; and those most pertinently aware of it were not the men who dealt it the final blow less than a month later, but the immediate entourage of the Empress at the Tuileries.

For from that moment (the 6th or 7th of August) the entourage of the Empress began to think of saving the Empire by sacrificing, if needs be, the Emperor. "There is only one thing that can avert the ruin of the dynasty," said a lady-in-waiting on the Empress, to a near relative of mine; "and that is the death of the Emperor at the head of his troops. That death would be considered an heroic one, and would benefit the Prince Imperial."

I do not pretend to determine how far the Empress shared that opinion, but here are some facts not generally known, even to this day, and for the truth of which I can unhesitatingly vouch.

The Empress did not know of the consultation that had taken place on the 1st of July, and to which I

have already referred. But she did know that the Emperor was suffering from a very serious complaint, and that the disease had been aggravated since his departure through his constantly being on horseback. M. Franceschini Pietri, the private secretary of the Emperor, had informed her to that effect on the 7th of August, when Forbach and Woerth had been fought. He also told her that the Emperor was not unwilling to return to Paris, and to leave the command-in-chief to Bazaine, but that his conscience and his pride forbade him to do so, unless some pressure were brought to bear upon him. I repeat, I can vouch for this, because I had it from the lips of M. Pietri, who was prefect of police until the 4th of September.

Meanwhile, others, besides M. Franceschini Pietri, had noticed the evident moral and mental depression of the Emperor, increased, no doubt, by his acute physical sufferings, which were patent to almost every one with whom he came in immediate contact; for an eye-witness wrote to me on the 4th of August: "The Emperor is in a very bad state; after Saarbruck, Lebrun and Lebœuf had virtually to lift him off his horse. The young prince, who, as you have probably heard already, was by his side all the time, looked very distressed, for his father had scarcely spoken to him during the engagement. But after they got into the carriage, which was waiting about a dozen yards away, the Emperor put his arm round his neck and kissed him on the cheeks, while two large tears rolled down his own. I noticed that the Emperor had scarcely strength to walk that dozen yards."

Lebœuf, who, like a great many more, has suffered to a certain extent for the faults of Marshal Niel,

perceived well enough that something had to be done to cheer the Emperor in his misfortunes. It was he who proposed that the latter should return to Paris, accompanied by him, while the corps d'armée of Frossard, which had effected its retreat in good order, and several other divisions that had not been under fire as yet, should endeavour to retrieve matters by attacking the armies of Von Steinmetz and Frederick-Charles, which at that identical moment were only in "course of formation." But Louis-Napoléon, while admitting the wisdom of the plan, sadly shook his head, and declared that he could not relinquish the chief command in view of the double defeat the army had suffered under his leadership.

What had happened, then, during the twenty-four hours immediately following the telegram of M. Franceschini Pietri? Simply this: not only had the Empress refused to exercise the pressure which would have afforded her husband an excuse for his return, but she had thrown cold water on the idea of that return by a despatch virtually discountenancing that return. The cabinet had not been consulted in this instance.

Nay, more; the cabinet on the 7th of August despatched, in secret, M. Maurice Richard, Minister of Arts, which at that time was distinct from the Ministry of Public Instruction, to inquire into the state of health of the Emperor and the degree of confidence with which he inspired the troops. That was on the 7th of August. He went by special train to Metz. Two hours after he was gone, Adolphe Ollivier told me and Ferrari at the Café de la Paix. A few hours after his return next day, he told us the result of those inquiries. M. Richard had brought back the worst possible news.

At a council of ministers, held early on the 9th, M. Emile Ollivier, in view of the communication made to him by his colleague, proposed the immediate return of the Emperor, fully expecting M. Richard to support him. The Empress energetically opposed the plan, and when M. Ollivier turned, as it were, to M. Richard, the latter kept ominously silent. Not to mince matters, he had been tampered with. M. Ollivier found himself absolutely powerless.

A day or so before that—I will not be positive as to the date—M. Ollivier telegraphed officially to the head-quarters at Metz, to request the return of the Prince Imperial, in accordance with the generally expressed wish of the Paris papers. M. Pietri told me that same day that the minister's telegram had been followed by one in the Empress's private cipher, expressing her wish that the Prince Imperial should remain with the army. She did not explain why. She merely recommended the Emperor to make the promise required, and then to pay no further heed to it.

The Regent had no power to summon parliament, nevertheless she did so, mainly in order to overthrow the Ollivier ministry. I am perfectly certain that the Emperor never forgave her for it. If those who were at Chislehurst are alive when these notes appear, they will probably bear me out.

What, in fact, could a parliament summoned under such circumstances be but a council of war, every one of whose decisions was canvassed in public and made the enemy still wiser than he was before? Of course, the Empress felt certain that she would be able to dismiss it as easily as it had been summoned; she

evidently did not remember the fable of the horse which had invited the man to get on its back in order to fight the stag. There is not the slightest doubt that, as I have already remarked, the Empress's main purpose was the overthrow of the Ollivier administration; if proof were wanted, the evidence of the men who overthrew the Empire would be sufficient to establish the fact, and not one, but half a dozen, have openly stated that the defeat of the Ollivier ministry was accomplished with the tacit approval of the court party: *read*, "the party of the Empress," to which I have referred before.

The list of the Empress's blunders, involuntary or the reverse, is too long to be transcribed in detail here; I return to my impressions of men and things after my meeting with General Beaufort d'Hautpoul in the Rue de Rivoli.

I do not suppose that in the whole of Paris there were a dozen sensible men who still cherished any illusions with regard to the possibility of retrieving the disasters by a dash into the enemy's country. The cry of "À Berlin!" had been finally abandoned even by the most chauvinistic. But the hope still remained that the Prussians would be thrust back from the "sacred soil of France" by some brilliant coup de main, although I am positive that the Empire would have been doomed just the same if that hope had been realized. Among those who had faith in the coup de main were M. Paul de Cassagnac and, curiously enough, General Beaufort d'Hautpoul. He had suddenly conceived great hopes with regard to Bazaine. M. de Cassagnac seriously contemplated enlisting in the Zouaves. Strange to relate, M. Paul de Cassagnac,

in spite of his well-known attachment to the Imperialist cause, was looked upon, by the most determined opponents of that cause among the masses, as a man to be trusted and consulted in a non-official way. I remember being on the Boulevard one evening after the affair at Beaumont, when the rage of the population was even stronger than after the defeats at Woerth and Forbach. All of a sudden we perceived a dense group swaying towards us—we were between the Rues Laffite and Le Peletier—and in the centre towered the tall figure of M. de Cassagnac. For a moment we were afraid that some mischief was being contemplated, the more that we had noticed several leaders of the revolutionary party—or, to speak by the card, of the Blanqui party—hovering near the Café Riche. But the demonstration was not a hostile one; on the contrary, it had a friendly tendency, and showed a tacit acknowledgment that, whosoever else might hide the truth from them, M. de Cassagnac would not do so. “What about rifles, M. Paul?” was the cry; “are there sufficient for us all?” It must be remembered that the *levée en masse* had been decreed. M. de Cassagnac could not tell the truth, and would not tell a lie. He frankly said, “I don’t know.” We noticed also that at his approach the Blanquists slunk away. The Empire had been tottering on its base until then; after Beaumont it was virtually doomed.



CHAPTER XI.

The 4th of September—A comic, not a tragic revolution—A burlesque Harold and a burlesque Boadicea—The news of Sedan only known publicly on the 3rd of September—Grief and consternation, but no rage—The latter feeling imported by the bands of Delescluze, Blanqui, and Félix Pyat—Blanqui, Pyat, & Co. *versus* Favre, Gambetta, & Co.—The former want their share of the spoil, and only get it some years afterwards—Ramail goes to the Palais-Bourbon—His report—Paris spends the night outdoors—Thiers a second-rate Talleyrand—His journey to the different courts of Europe—His interview with Lord Granville—The 4th of September—The Imperial eagles disappear—The joyousness of the crowd—The Place de la Concorde—The gardens of the Tuileries—The crowds in the Rue de Rivoli scarcely pay attention to the Tuileries—The soldiers fraternizing with the people, and proclaiming the republic from the barracks' windows—A serious procession—Sampierro Gavini gives his opinion—The "heroic struggles" of an Empress, and the crownless coronation of "le Roi Pétaud"—Ramail at the Tuileries—How M. Sardou saved the palace from being burned and sacked—The republic proclaimed—Illuminations as after a victory.

ONLY those who were at a distance from Paris on the 4th of September, 1870, can be deluded into the belief that the scenes enacted there on that day partook of a dramatic character. Carefully and scrupulously dovetailed, they constitute one vast burlesque of a revolution. It is not because the overthrow of the Second Empire was accomplished without bloodshed that I say this. Bloodshed would have only made the burlesque more gruesome, but it could have never converted it into a tragedy, the recollection of which would have made men think and shudder even after the lapse of many years. As it is, the recollection of

the 4th of September can only make the independent witness smile. On the one hand, a burlesque Harold driven off to Wilhelmshöhe in a landau, surrounded by a troop of Uhlans; and a burlesque Boadicea slinking off in a hackney cab, *minus* the necessary handkerchiefs for the cold in her head,—“fleeing when no one pursueth,” instead of poisoning herself: on the other, “ceux qui prennent la parole pour autrui,” *i.e.* the lawyers, prenant le pouvoir pour eux-mêmes. Really, the only chronicler capable of dealing with the situation in the right spirit is our old and valued friend, Mr. Punch. Personally, from the Saturday afternoon until the early hours on Monday, I saw scarcely one incident worthy of being treated seriously; nor did the accounts supplied to me by others tend to modify my impressions.

Though the defeat at Sedan was virtually complete on Thursday the 1st at nine p.m., not the faintest rumour of it reached Paris before Friday evening at an advanced hour, and the real truth was not known generally until the Saturday at the hour just named. There was grief and consternation on many faces, but no expression of fury or anger. That sentiment, at any rate in its outward manifestations, had to be supplied from the heights of Belleville and Montmartre, Montrouge and Montparnasse, when, later on, a good many of the inhabitants of those delightful regions came down like an avalanche on the heart of the city. They were the lambs of Blanqui, Delescluze, Félix Pyat, and Millière. They were dispersed on reaching the Boulevard Montmartre, and we saw nothing of them from where we were seated, at the Café de la Paix. By the time they rallied in the side streets and had marched to the Palais-Bourbon, they

found their competitors, Favre, Gambetta, & Co., trying to oust the ministers of the Empire. But for that unfortunate delay we might have had the Commune on the 4th of September instead of on the 18th of March following. Blanqui, Pyat, & Co. never forgave Favre, Gambetta, & Co. for having forestalled them, and, above all, for not having shared the proceeds of the spoil. This is so true that, even after many years of lording it, the successors of, and co-founders with, the firm of Favre, Gambetta, & Co. have been obliged, not only to grant an amnesty to those whom they cheated at the beginning, but to admit them to some of the benefits of the undertaking; Méline, Tirard, Ranc, Alphonse Humbert, Camille Barrère, and a hundred others more or less implicated in the Commune, are all occupying fat posts at the hour I write.

A friend of ours, whose impartiality was beyond suspicion, and who had more strength and inclination to battle with crowds than any of us, offered to go and see how the land lay at the Palais-Bourbon. He returned in about an hour, and told us that Gambetta, perched on a chair, had been addressing the crowd from behind the railings, exhorting them to patience and moderation. "Clever trick that," said our informant; "it's the confidence-trick of housebreakers when two separate gangs have designs upon the same 'crib'; while the first arrivals 'crack' it, they send one endowed with the 'gift of the gab' to pacify the others."

One thing is certain—Gambetta and his crew did not want to pursue the war, they wanted a Constituent Assembly which would have left them to enjoy in peace the fruits of their usurpation; for theirs was

as much usurpation as was the Coup d'Etat. Their subsequent "Not an inch of our territory, not a stone of our fortresses," was an afterthought, when they found that Bismarck would not grant them as good a peace as he would have granted Napoleon at Donchery the morning after Sedan.

At about ten on Saturday night everybody knew that there would be a night sitting, and I doubt whether one-fourth of the adult male population of Paris went to bed at all, even if they retired to their own homes.

Our friend returned to the Palais-Bourbon, but failed to get a trustworthy account of what had happened during the twenty-five minutes the deputies had been assembled. All he knew was that nominally the Empire was still standing, though virtually it had ceased to exist; a bill for its deposition having been laid on the table. On his way back to the Boulevards he saw the carriage of Thiers surrounded, and an attempt to take out the horses. He called Thiers "*le recéleur des vols commis au préjudice des monarchies.*"*

Let me look for a moment at that second-rate Talleyrand, who has been grandiloquently termed the "liberator of the soil" because he happened to do what any intelligent bank manager could have done as well; let me endeavour to establish his share in the 4th of September. I am speaking on the authority of men who were behind the political scenes for many years, and whose contempt for nearly all the actors was equally great. Thiers refused his aid and counsel to the Empress, who solicited it through the inter-

* "*The receiver of the goods stolen from monarchies.*"—EDITOR.

mediary of Prince Metternich and M. Prosper Mérimée, but he also refused to accept the power offered to him by Gambetta, Favre, Jules Simon, etc., in the afternoon of the 4th of September. Nevertheless, he was here, there, and everywhere; offering advice, but careful not to take any responsibility. Afterwards he took a journey to the various courts of Europe. I only know the particulars of one interview—that with Lord Granville—but I can vouch for their truth. After having held forth for two hours without giving his lordship a chance of edging in a word sideways, he stopped; and five minutes later, while Lord Granville was enumerating the reasons why the cabinet of St. James's could not interfere, he (Thiers) was fast asleep. When the conditions of peace were being discussed, Thiers was in favour of giving up Belfort rather than pay another milliard of francs. "A city you may recover, a milliard of francs you never get back," he said. Nevertheless, historians will tell one that Thiers made superhuman efforts to save Belfort. I did not like M. Thiers, and, being conscious of my dislike, I have throughout these notes endeavoured to say as little as possible of him.

The sun rose radiantly over Paris on the 4th of September, and I was up betimes, though I had not gone to bed until 3 a.m. There was a dense crowd all along the Rue Royale and the Place de la Concorde, and several hours before the Chamber had begun to discuss the deposition of the Bonapartes (which was never formally voted), volunteer-workmen were destroying or hauling down the Imperial eagles. The mob cheered them vociferously, and when one of these workmen hurt himself severely, they carried him away in

triumph. Nevertheless, there was a good deal of hooting as several well-known members of the Chamber elbowed their way through the serried masses. Though they were well known, I argued myself unknown in not knowing them. I was under the impression that they were Imperialists, they turned out to be Republicans. The marks of disapproval proceeded from compact groups of what were apparently workmen. As I knew that no workmen devoted to the Empire would have dared to gather in that way, even if their numbers had been sufficient, and as I felt reluctant to inquire, I came to the natural conclusion that the hooters were the supporters of Blanqui, Pyat, & Co. The Commune was foreshadowed on the Place de la Concorde on that day.

My experience of the 24th of February, 1848, told me that the Chamber would be invaded before long. In 1848 there was no more danger for a foreigner to mix with the rabble than for a Frenchman. I felt not quite so sure about my safety on the 4th of September. My adventure in the Avenue de Clichy, which I will relate anon, had not happened then, and I was not as careful as I became afterwards, still I remembered in time the advice of the prudent Frenchman—"When in doubt, abstain;" and I prepared to retrace my steps to the Boulevards, where, I knew, there would be no mistake about my identity. At the same time, I am bound to say that no such accident as I dreaded occurred during that day, as far as I am aware. There may or may not have been at that hour half a hundred spies of Bismarck in the city, but no one was molested. The Parisians were so evidently overjoyed at getting rid of the Empire, that for four and twenty hours, at any rate,

they forgot all about the hated Germans and their march upon the capital. They were shaking hands with, and congratulating one another, as if some great piece of good fortune had befallen them. Years before that, I had seen my wife behave in a similarly joyous manner after having dismissed at a moment's notice a cook who had shamefully robbed us: the wife knew very well that, on the morrow, the tradesmen, the amount of whose bills the dishonest servant had pocketed for months, would be sending in their claims upon us. "Perhaps they will take into consideration that we dismissed her," she said, "and not hold us responsible." The Latin race, and especially the French, are the females of the human race.

I noticed that the gates of the Tuileries gardens on the Place de la Concorde were still open, and that the gardens themselves were black with people. It must have been about half-past ten or eleven. I did not go back by the Rue Royale, but by the Rue de Rivoli. The people were absolutely streaming down the street. There was not a single threatening gesture on their part; they merely looked at the flag still floating over the Tuileries, and passed on. When I got back to the Boulevards, I sat down outside the Café de la Paix, determined not to stir if possible. I knew that whatever happened the news of it would soon be brought thither. I was not mistaken.

The first news we had was that the National Guards had replaced the regulars inside and around the Palais-Bourbons, which was either a sign that the latter could be no longer depended upon, or that the Republicans in the Chamber had carried that measure in their own interest. I am bound to admit that I would always

sooner take the word of a French officer than that of a deputy, of no matter what shade; and I heard afterwards that the troops at the Napoleon barracks and elsewhere had begun to fraternize with the people as early as eight in the morning, by shouting, from the windows of their rooms, "Vive la République!" The Chamber was invaded, nevertheless; it is as well to state that this invasion gave Jules Favre & Co. a chance of repairing in hot haste to the Hôtel de Ville, where the Government of the National Defence was proclaimed.

To return to my vantage-post at the Café de la Paix. The crowds on the Place de la Concorde, apparently stationed there since early morning, did not seem to me to have been brought thither at the instance of a leader or in obedience to a watchword. I except, of course, the groups of which I have already spoken, and which jeered at the republican deputies. The streams of people I met on my return in the Rue de Rivoli seemed impelled by their own curiosity to the Chamber of Deputies. Not so the procession which hove in sight almost the moment I had sat down at the Café. It wheeled to the left when reaching the Rue de la Paix. It was composed of National Guards with and without their muskets, each company preceded by its own officers,—the armed ones infinitely more numerous than the unarmed, but all marching in good order and in utter silence; in fact, so silently as to bode mischief. Behind and before there strode large contingents of ordinary citizens, and I noticed two things: that few of them wore blouses, and that a good many wore kepis, apparently quite new. The wearers, though equally undemonstrative, gave one the

impression of being the leaders. Most of those around me shook their heads ominously as they passed; their silence did not impose upon them. I am free to confess that I did not share their opinion. To me, the whole looked like stern determined manifestors; not like turbulent revolutionaries. I had seen nothing like them in '48. Nevertheless, it was I who was mistaken, for, according to M. Sampierro Gavini, who, unlike his brother Denis, belonged to the opposition during the Empire, it was they who invaded the Chamber. I may add that M. Sampierro Gavini, though in the opposition, had little or no sympathy with those who overthrew the Empire or established the Commune. He had an almost idealistic faith in constitutional means, and a somewhat exaggerated reverence for the name of Bonaparte. He was a Corsican.

For several hours nothing occurred worthy of record. The accounts brought to us by eye-witnesses of events going on simultaneously at the Tuileries and the Palais-Bourbon showed plainly that there was no intention on the mob's part to exalt the Empress into a Marie-Antoinette. Our friend who had given us the news of the Chamber on the previous night, and who was a relative of the celebrated Dr. Yvan, an habitué of the Café de la Paix, had made up his mind in the morning that "it would be more interesting to watch the" last heroic struggles of an Empress against iron fortune than the "crownless coronation of a half-score of 'rois Pétauds.'"* As such, he had taken up his station

* In olden times, every community, corporation, and guild in France elected annually a king—even the mendicants, whose ruler took the title of King Pétaud, from the Latin *peto*, I ask. The latter's court, as a matter of course, was a perfect bear-garden, in which every one did as he liked, in which every one was as much sovereign as the

in the gardens of the Tuileries, close to the gate dividing the private from the public gardens. It was he who gave us the particulars of the scenes preceding and succeeding the Empress's flight, the exact moment of which no one seemed to know. The account of these scenes was so exceedingly graphic, that I have no difficulty whatsoever in remembering them. Moreover, I put down at the time several of his own expressions. I do not know what has become of him. He went to New-Zealand on account of some unhappy love-affair, and was never heard of any more. Though scarcely thirty then, he was a promising young doctor. His name was Ramail, but I do not know in what relation he stood to Dr. Yvan; who, however, always called him cousin.

Young Ramail had been in the Tuileries gardens since noon. The crowd was already very large at that hour, but it seemed altogether engrossed in the doings of an individual who was knocking down a gilded eagle on the top of the gate. "Mind," said Ramail, "that was at twelve o'clock, or somewhere thereabouts; and I do not think that the sitting at the Chamber began until at least an hour later. If the Republicans say, in days to come, that the Empire was virtually condemned before they voted its overthrow, they will, at any rate, have the semblance of truth on their side, because there were at least two thousand

titular one. The expression, "the Court of King Pétaud," became a synonym for everything that was disorderly, ridiculous, and disgusting.

"Oui, je sors de chez vous fort mal édifiée;
 Dans toutes mes leçons j'y suis contrariée;
 On n'y respecte rien, chacun y parle haut,
 Et c'est tout justement la cour du roi Pétaud."

(MOLIÈRE, "Tartuffe," Act i. Sc. 1.)—EDITOR.

persons looking on without trying to prevent the destruction of the eagles by word or deed; and two thousand persons, if they happen to agree with them, are to the Republicans the whole of France; while two millions, if they happen to differ from them, are only a corrupt and unintelligent majority.

"But I was wondering," he went on, "at the utter ingratitude of the lower and lower-middle classes. I feel certain that among those who stood staring there, half owed their prosperous condition to the eighteen years of Imperialism; yet I heard not a single expression of regret at the brutal sweeping away of it.

"I may have stood there for about an hour, a score of steps away from the gate before the swingbridge, when, all at once, I felt myself carried forward with the crowd; and before I had time to look round, I found myself inside that other gate. There were about five hundred persons who had entered with me, but in what manner the gate gave way or was opened I have not the vaguest idea. We went no further; we stopped as suddenly as we had advanced. I turned round with difficulty, and looked over the heads of those behind me; sure enough, the gates were wide open and the crowd at the rear was much denser than it had been ten minutes before. Still they stood perfectly still, without bringing any pressure to bear upon us. Then I turned round again, and saw the cause of their reluctance to move. The Imperial Guard was being massed in front of the principal door leading from the private gardens into the palace. 'My dear Ramail,' I said to myself, 'you stand a very good chance of having a bullet through your head before you are ten minutes older; because, at the slightest move of the crowd

among which you now stand, the guard will fire.' I own that I was scarcely prepared to face death for such a trivial cause as this; and I was quietly edging my way out of the crowd, which was beginning to utter low ominous growls, when a voice, ringing clear upon the air, shouted, 'Citoyens!' I stopped, turned round once more, and stood on tiptoe.

"The speaker was a tall, handsome fellow, young to all appearance, and with a voice like a bell. He looked a gentleman, but I have never seen him before to my knowledge. His companion I knew at once; it was Victorien Sardou. There is no mistaking that face. I have heard some people say that it is not a bit like that of the great Napoleon, while others maintain that, placing the living man and the portrait of the dead one side by side, one could not tell the difference. I'll undertake to say this, that if M. Sardou had donned a uniform, such as the lieutenant of artillery wore at Arcola, for instance, he might have taken the Empress by the hand and led her out safely among the people, who would have believed in some miraculous resurrection.

"To come back to my story. 'Citoyens,' repeated M. Sardou's companion, 'I do not wonder at your surprise that the garden should not be open to you and its ingress forbidden by soldiers. The Tuileries belong to the people, now that the Empire is gone; for gone it is by this time, in spite of the Imperial Guard massed before yonder door. Consequently, my friend and I propose to go and ask for the withdrawal of these soldiers. But, in order to do this, you must give us your promise not to budge; for the slightest attempt on your part to do so before our return may lead

to bloodshed, and I am convinced that you are as anxious as we are to avoid such a calamity.'

"If that young fellow is not an actor, he ought to be. Every word he said could be heard distinctly and produced its effect. The crowd cheered him and promised unanimously to wait. Then we saw him and M. Sardou take out their handkerchiefs and tie them to the end of their sticks. Perhaps it was well they did, for as I saw them boldly walk up the central avenue, I was not at all convinced that their lives were not in danger. My sight is excellent, and I noticed a decidedly hostile movement on the part of the troops ranged in front of the principal door, and an officer of Mables was evidently of my opinion, for, though he followed them at a distance, he kept prudently behind the trees, sheltering himself as much as possible. I do not pretend to be wiser than most of my fellow-men, but I doubt whether many among those who watched M. Sardou and his companion suspected the true drift of their self-imposed mission. They merely wished to save the Tuileries from being pillaged and burnt down. I do not wish to libel the Imperial Guard or their officers, but I should feel much surprised if that noble idea ever entered their heads. What was the magnificent pile to them, now that one of their idols had left it, probably for ever, and the other was about to do the same? At any rate, the suspicious movement was there. I have forgotten to tell you that the inner gate was closed and I saw M. Sardou parley through its bars with one of the guardians. Then a superior officer, accompanied by a civilian, came out; but by this time, the crowd, which had kept back, was beginning

to move also, I among them. All of a sudden, the general, who turned out to be General Mellinet, gets on a chair, while his companion, who turns out to be M. de Lesseps, stands by him. The Imperial Guard disappears, seeing which, the crowd, no longer apprehensive of being shot down, advances rapidly to within a few steps of the gate. Then there is a cheer, for the Imperial flag is hauled down from the roof. 'Gentlemen,' says the general, 'the Tuileries are empty, the Empress is gone. But it is my duty to guard the palace, and I count upon you to help me.' He says a great deal more, but the crowd are pressing forward all the same. I feel that the crucial moment has arrived, and that the palace will be invaded, in spite of the general's speechifying, when lo, the Gardes Mobiles issue from the front door, and range themselves in two rows. The gates are opened, the crowd rushes in, but the Mobiles are there to prevent them making any excursions, either upstairs or into the apartments, and in a few minutes we find ourselves in the Place du Carrousel. The palace has been virtually saved by M. Sardou."

Half an hour later, we receive the news that the Government of the National Defence has been proclaimed at the Hôtel de Ville, and that night Paris is illuminated as after a victory.

CHAPTER XII.

The siege—The Parisians convinced that the Germans will not invest Paris—Paris becomes a vast drill-ground, nevertheless—The Parisians leave off singing, but listen to itinerant performers, though the latter no longer sing the "Marseillaise"—The theatres closed—The Comédie-Française and the Opéra—Influx of the Gardes Mobiles—The Parisian no longer chaffs the provincial, but does the honours of the city to him—The stolid, gaunt Breton and the astute and cynical Normand—The gardens of the Tuileries an artillery park—The mitrailleuse still commands confidence—The papers try to be comic—Food may fail, drink will not—My visit to the wine dépôt at Bercy—An official's information—Cattle in the public squares and on the outer Boulevards—Fear with regard to them—Every man carries a rifle—The woods in the suburbs are set on fire—The statue of Strasburg on the Place de la Concorde—M. Prudhomme to his sons—The men who do not spout—The French shopkeeper and bourgeois—A story of his greed—He reveals the whereabouts of the cable laid on the bed of the Seine—Obscure heroes—Would-be Ravailleurs and Balthazar Gerards—Inventors of schemes for the instant annihilation of all the Germans—A musical mitrailleuse—An exhibition and lecture at the Alcazar—The last train—Trains converted into dwellings for the suburban poor—Interior of a railway station—The spy mania—Where the Parisians ought to have looked for spies—I am arrested as a spy—A chat with the officer in charge—A terrible-looking knife.

IN spite of the frequent reports from the provinces that the Germans were marching on Paris, there were thousands of people in the capital who seriously maintained that they, the Germans, would not dare to invest, let alone, shell it. But it must not be inferred, as many English writers have done, that this confidence was due to a mistaken view of the Germans' pluck, or their reluctance to beard the "lion" in his den. Not at all. The Parisians simply

credited their foes with the superstitious love and reverence for "the centre of light and civilization" which they themselves felt. They did not take their cue from Victor Hugo's "highfalutin'" remonstrance to King William; on the contrary, it was the poet who translated their sentiments. It was not a case of "one fool making many;" but of many mute inglorious visionaries inspiring a still greater one, who had the gift of eloquence, which eloquence, in this instance, bordered very closely on sublimated drivél.

Nevertheless, the whole of Paris became suddenly transformed into one vast drill-ground, and the clang of arms resounded through the city day and night. For the time being, the crowds left off singing, albeit that they listened now and then devoutly and reverently to itinerant performers, male and female, who had paraphrased the patriotic airs of certain operas for the occasion. The "*Pars beau mousquetaire*," etc., of Halévy, became "*Pars beau volontaire*;" the "*Guerre aux tyrans*," of the same composer, "*Guerre aux all'mands*,"* and so forth.

All the theatres had closed their doors by this time, the Comédie-Française being last, I believe; though, almost immediately afterwards, it threw open its portals once more for at least two performances a week, and often a third time, in aid of the victims of the siege. Meanwhile, several rooms were being got ready for the reception of the wounded; the new opera-house, still unfinished, was made into a commissariat and partly into a barracks, for the provincial Gardes Mobiles were flocking by thousands to the capital,

* The first from "*Les Mousquetaires de la Reine*;" the second from "*Charles VI.*"—EDITOR.

and the camps could not hold them all. For once in a way the Parisian forgot to chaff the provincial who came to pay him a visit; and considering that, even under such circumstances, all drill and no play would make Jacques a dull boy, he not only received him very cordially, but showed him some of the lions of the capital, at which the long-haired gaunt and stolid Breton stared without moving a muscle, only muttering an unintelligible gibberish, which might be an invocation to his ancient pagan gods, or a tribute of admiration; while the more astute and cynical, though scarcely more impressionable Normand, ten thousand of which had come from the banks of the Marne, showed the thought underlying all his daily actions, in one sentence: "*C'est ben beau, mais ça a coûté beaucoup d'argent; fallait mieux le garder en poche.*" Even at this supreme moment, he remembered, with a kind of bitterness, that he had been made to pay for part of all this glorious architecture.

The Cirques Napoleon and de l'Impératrice—the Republic had not had time to change their names—had become a kind of left-luggage office for these human cargoes, taken thither at their arrival, which happened generally during the night. In the morning they were transferred to their permanent encampments, and their military education was proceeded with at once. I am afraid I am not competent to judge of the merits of the method adopted, but I was by no means powerfully impressed with the knowledge displayed by the instructors.

The gardens of the Tuileries had been closed to the public, who had to be satisfied with admiring the ordnance and long rows of horses parked there from

a distance. Did the latter lend enchantment to the view? Apparently, for they were never tired of gazing with ecstasy on the mitrailleuses. The gunners in charge treated the foremost of the gazers now and then to a lecture on artillery practice, through the railings of the gates. In whatsoever else they had lost faith, those murderous engines of war evidently still commanded their confidence.

The frightful din that marked the first weeks of the war had ceased, but Paris did by no means look crest-fallen. The gas burned brightly still, the cafés were full of people, the restaurants had all their tables occupied; for we were not "invested" yet, and the idea of scarcity, let alone of famine, though a much-discussed contingency, was not a staring, stubborn fact. "It will never become one," said and thought many, "and all that talk about doling out rations already is so much nonsense." The papers waxed positively comic on the subject. They also waxed comic over the telegrams of the King of Prussia to his Consort; but they left off harping on that string, for very shame's sake.

One thing was certain from the beginning of the siege—whatever else might fail, there was enough wine and to spare to cheer the hearts of men who professed to do and dare more than men. Though the best part of my life had been spent in Paris, I had, curiously enough, never seen the wine and spirit dépôts at Bercy; in fact, I was profoundly ignorant of that, as well as of other matters connected with the food-supply of Paris. So I wrote to a member of the firm which had supplied me for many years with wine and spirits, and he took me thither.

I should think that the "entrepôt-general," as it is

called, occupied, at that time, not less than sixty acres of ground, which meant more than treble that area as far as storage was concerned; for there was not only the cellarage, but the buildings above ground, rising, in many instances, to three and four stories. The entrepôt consisted, and consists still, I believe, of three distinct parts: one for wines; another for what the French call "alcohols," and we "spirits;" a third, much smaller, for potable or, rather, edible oils. The latter wing contains the cellarage of the general administration of the hospitals. The spirit-cellars were absolutely empty at the time of my visit; their contents had been removed to a bomb and shell proof cellarage hard by.

Though I had come to see, I felt very little wiser after leaving the cellars than before; for, truth to tell, I was absolutely bewildered. I had no more idea of the quantity of wine stored there than a child. My guide laughed.

"We'll soon make the matter clear to you," he said, shaking hands with a gentleman who turned out to be one of the principal employés. "This gentleman will tell you almost to a hectolitre the quantity of ordinary wine in store. You know pretty well the number of inhabitants of the capital, and though it has considerably increased during the last few days, and is not unlikely to decrease during the siege, if siege there be, the influx does not amount to a hundred thousand. Now, monsieur, will you tell this gentleman what you have in stock?"

"We have got at the present moment 1,600,000 hectolitres of ordinary wine in our cellars. Ten days ago we had nearly one hundred thousand more, but

the wine-shops and others have laid in large provisions since then. The more expensive wines I need not mention, because the quantity is very considerably less, and, moreover, they are not likely to be wanted; though, if they were wanted, they would keep us going for many, many weeks. At a rough guess, the number of 'souls' within the fortifications is about 1,700,000, with the recent increase 1,800,000; consequently, with what the 'liquoristes' have recently bought, one hundred litres for every man, woman, and child. I do not reckon the contents of private cellars, nor those of the wine-merchants, apart from their recent purchases. Nor is ordinary wine much dearer than it was in years of great plenty; it is, in fact, less by twenty-five francs or thirty francs than in the middle of the fifties. I am comparing prices for quarter pipes, containing from two hundred and ten to two hundred and thirty litres. There is no fear of regrating here, nor the likelihood of our having to drink water for some time."

On our homeward journey, we noticed bullocks, pigs, and sheep littered down in some of the public squares and on the outer boulevards. The stunted grass in the former had already entirely disappeared, and it was evident that, with the utmost care, the cattle would deteriorate under the existing circumstances; for fodder would probably be the first commodity to fail: as it was, it had already risen to more than twice its former price. Moreover, the competent judges feared that, in the event of a rainy autumn, the cattle penned in such small spaces would be more subject to epidemic diseases, which would absolutely render them unfit for human food. In view of such a

contingency, the learned members of the Académie des Sciences were beginning to put their heads together, but the results of their deliberations were not known as yet.

We returned on foot as we had come; private carriages had entirely disappeared, and though the omnibuses and cabs were plying as usual, their progress was seriously impeded by long lines of vans, heavily laden with neat deal boxes, evidently containing tinned provisions. Very few female passengers in the public conveyances, and scarcely a man without a rifle. They were the future defenders of the capital, who had been to Vincennes, where the distribution of arms was going on from early morn till late at night. In fact, the sight of a working-man not provided with a rifle, a mattock, a spade, or a pickaxe was becoming a rarity, for a great many had been engaged to aid the engineers in digging trenches, spiking the ground, etc.

I did not, and do not, feel competent to judge of the utility of all these means of defence; one of them, however, seemed to be conceived in the wrong spirit: I allude to the firing of the woods around Paris. With the results of Forbach and Wœrth to guide them, the generals entrusted with the defence of Paris could not leave the woods to stand; but was there any necessity to destroy them in the way they did? In spite of the activity displayed, there were still thousands of idle hands anxious to be employed. Why were not the trees cut down and transported to Paris, for fuel for the coming winter? At that moment there were lots of horses available, and such a measure would have given us the double advantage of saving

coals for the manufacture of gas, and of protecting from the rigours of the coming winter hundreds whose sufferings would have been mitigated by light and heat. Personally, I did not suffer much. From what I have seen during the siege, I have come to the conclusion that shortcomings in the way of food are far less hard to bear, nay, are almost cheerfully borne, in a warm room and with a lamp brightly burning. I leave out of the question the quantities of mineral oil wasted in the attempt to set fire to the woods, because in many instances the attempt failed utterly.

Meanwhile, patriotism was kept at the boiling point, by glowing reports of the heroic defence of General Urich at Strasburg. The statue, representing the capital of Alsace on the Place de la Concorde, became the goal of a reverent pilgrimage on the part of the Parisians, though the effect of it was spoiled too frequently by M. Prudhomme holding forth sententiously, to his sons apparently, to the crowd in reality. These discourses reminded one too much of Heine's sneer, that "all Frenchmen are actors, and the worse are generally on the stage." In this instance, however, the amateurs ran the professional very hard. The crowds were not hypercritical, though, and they applauded the speaker, who departed, accompanied by his offspring, with the proud consciousness that he was a born orator, and that he had done his duty to his country by spouting platitudes. It is not difficult to give the general sequel to that amateur performance. Next morning there is a line in some obscure paper, and M. Prudhomme, beside himself with joy, leaves his card on the journalist who wrote it; the journalist leaves his in return, and for the next six months the

latter has his knife and fork laid at M. Prudhomme's table. The acquaintance generally terminates on M. Prudhomme's discovery that Madame Prudhomme carried her friendship too far by looking after the domestic concerns of the scribe, at the scribe's bachelor quarters.

The men who did not spout were the Duruys, the Meissoniers, and a hundred others I could mention. The eminent historian and grand-master of the University, though sixty, donned the simple uniform of a National Guard, and performed his garrison duties like the humblest artisan, only distinguished from the latter by his star of grand-officer of the Légion d'Honneur; the great painter did the same. The French shopkeeping bourgeois is, as a rule, a silly, pompous creature; very frequently, he is mean and contemptible besides.

Here is a story for the truth of which I can vouch, and which shows him in his true light. In the skirmish in which Lieutenant Winslow was killed, some damage had been done to the inn at Schirlenhoff, where the Baden officers were at breakfast when they were surprised by General de Bernis and his men. The general had his foot already in the stirrup, and was about to remove his prisoners, when Boniface made his appearance, coolly asking to whom he was to present the bill for the breakage. The general burst out laughing: "The losing party pays the damage as a rule," he said, "but France is sufficiently rich to reverse the rule. Here is double the amount of your bill."

A second story, equally authentic. A cable had been secretly laid on the bed of the Seine between

Paris and Havre, shortly before the siege. Two small shopkeepers of St. Germain revealed the fact for a consideration to the Germans, who had but very vague suspicions of it, and who certainly did not know the land-bearings; one of the scoundrels was caught after the siege, the other escaped. The one who was tried pleaded poverty, and received a ridiculously small sentence. It transpired afterwards that he was exceedingly well paid for his treachery, and that he cheated his fellow-informer out of his share.

The contrast is more pleasant to dwell upon. There were hundreds of obscure heroes, by which I do not mean those prepared to shed their blood on the battle-field, but men with a sublime indifference to life, courting the fate of a Ravailac and a Balthazar Gerard. History would have called them regicides, and perhaps ranked them with paid assassins had they accomplished their purpose, would have held them up to the scorn of posterity as bloodthirsty fanatics,—and history, for once in a way, would have been wrong. In their reprehensible folly, they were more estimable than the Jules Favres, the Gambettas who played at being the saviours of the country, and who were only the saviours of their needy, fellow political adventurers.

Apart from the former, there were the inventors of impossible schemes for the instantaneous annihilation of the three hundred thousand Germans around Paris,—inventors who supply the comic note in the otherwise terrible drama,—inventors who day by day besiege the Ministry for War, and to whom, after all, the minister's collaborateurs are compelled to listen "on the chance of there being something in their schemes."

"I am asking myself, every now and then, whether

I am a staff-officer or one of the doctors at Charenton," said Prince Bibesco, one evening.

"Since yesterday morning," he went on, "I have been interviewed by a dozen inventors, every one of whom wanted to see General Trochu or General Schmitz, and would scarcely be persuaded that I would do as well. The first one simply took the breath out of me. I had no energy left to resist the others, or to bow them out politely; if they had chosen to keep on talking for four and twenty hours, I should have been compelled to listen. He was a little man, about the height of M. Thiers. His opening speech was in proportion to his height; it consisted of one line. 'Monsieur, I annihilate the Germans with one blow,' he said. I was thrown off my guard in spite of myself, for etiquette demands that I should keep serious in spite of myself; and I replied, 'Let me fill my pipe before you do it.'

"Meanwhile, my visitor spread out a large roll of paper on the table. 'I am not an inventor,' he said; 'I merely adapt the lessons of ancient history to the present circumstances. I merely modify the trick of the horse of Troy. Here is Paris with its ninety-six bastions, its forts, etc. I draw three lines: along the first I send twenty-five thousand men pretending to attack the northern positions of the enemy; along the second line I send a similar number, apparently bent on a similar attempt to the south; my fifty thousand troops are perfectly visible to the Germans, for they commence their march an hour or so before dusk. Meanwhile darkness sets in, and that is the moment I choose to despatch a hundred and fifty thousand troops, screened and entirely concealed by a movable wall of

sheet iron, blackened by smoke. My inventive powers have gone no further than this. My hundred and fifty thousand men behind their wall penetrate unhindered as far as the Prussian lines, where a hundred thousand fall on their backs, taking aim over the wall, while fifty thousand keep moving it forward slowly. Twelve shots for every man make twelve hundred thousand shots—more than sufficient to cause a panic among the Germans, who do not know whence the firing proceeds, because my wall is as dark as night itself. Supposing, however, that those who have been left in the camp defend themselves, their projectiles will glance off against the sheet iron of the wall, which, if necessary, can be thrown down finally by our own men, who will finish their business with the bayonet and the sword.'

"My second visitor had something not less formidable to propose; namely, a sledge-hammer, fifteen miles in circumference, and weighing ten millions of tons. It was to be lifted up to a certain altitude by means of balloons. A favourable wind had to be waited for, which would send the balloons in the direction of Versailles, where the ropes confining the hammer would be cut. In its fall it would crush and bury the head-quarters and the bulk of the German army.

"The third showed me the plan of a musical mitrailleuse, which would deal death and destruction while playing Wagner, Schubert, and Mendelssohn, the former by preference. 'The Germans,' he remarked, 'are too fond of music to be able to resist the temptation of listening. They are sure to draw near in thousands when my mitrailleuses are set playing.

We have got them at our mercy.' I asked him to send me a small one as a sample: he promised to do so."

Another evening I was induced to go to the Alcazar. I had been there once before, to hear Thérèse. This time it was to see an "Exhibition of Engines of War," and to listen to a practical lecture thereon. The audience was as jolly as if the Germans were a thousand miles away—jollier, perhaps, than when they listened to "Rien n'est sacré pour un sapeur;" because they were virtually taking part in the performance. The lecturer began by an exhibition of bullet-proof pads, by means of which the soldier might fearlessly advance towards the enemy; "because they render that part of the body on which they are worn invulnerable." A wag among the spectators made a remark about "retreating soldiers," which I cannot transcribe; but the exhibitor, an Italian or Spanish major, to judge by his accent, was in no way disconcerted. He placed his pad against an upright board in the shape of a target and began firing at it with a revolver at a distance of four or five paces. The material, though singed, was not pierced, but the spectators seemed by no means convinced. "You wear the pad, and let me have a shot at you," exclaimed one; at which offer the major made a long face. "Have you ever tried the experiment on a living animal?" asks another. "Perfectly," replied the major; "I tried it on my clerk," which admission was hailed with shouts of laughter. There were cries for the clerk, who did not appear. A corporal of the National Guards proposed to try an experiment on the major and the pad with the bayonet fastened to a chassepot; thereupon major and pad suddenly disappeared behind the wings.

The next inventor exhibits a fire-extinguisher ; the audience require more than a verbal explanation ; some of them propose to set the Alcazar on fire. A small panic, checked in time ; and the various demonstrations are proceeded with amidst shouts, and laughter, and jokes. They yield no practical results, but they kill time. They are voted the next best thing to the theatre.

By this time we were shut off from the outer world. On the 17th of September, at night, the last train of the Orleans Railway Company had left Paris. The others had ceased working a day or so before, and placed their rolling stock in safety. Not the whole of it, though. A great many of the third-class carriages have had their seats taken out, the luggage and goods vans have been washed, the cattle trucks boarded in, and all these transformed into temporary dwellings for the suburban poor who have been obliged to seek shelter within the walls of the capital. The interiors of the principal railway stations present scenes that would rejoice the hearts of genre-painters on a large scale. The washing and cooking of all these squatters is done on the various platforms, the carriages have become parlour and bedroom in one, and there has even been some ingenuity displayed in their decoration. The womankind rarely stir from their improvised homes ; the men are on the fortifications or roaming the streets of Paris. Part of the household gods has been stowed inside the trucks, the rest is piled up in front. The domestic pets, such as cats and dogs, have, as yet, not been killed for food, and the former have a particularly good time of it, for mice and rats abound, especially in the goods-sheds. Here and there a goat gravely stalking along, happily unconscious of its

impending doom; and chancicleer surrounded by a small harem trying to make the best of things.

Of course, the sudden and enormous influx of human beings could not be housed altogether in that way, but care has been taken that none of them shall be shelterless. All the tenantless apartments, from the most palatial in the Faubourg St. Honoré and Champs-Élysées to the humblest in the popular quarters, have been utilized, and the pot-au-feu simmers in marble fireplaces, while Gallic Hodge sees his face reflected in gigantic mirrors the like of which he never saw before. The dwellings that have been merely vacated by their tenants who have flitted to Homburg and Baden-Baden, to Nice and elsewhere, are as yet not called into requisition by the authorities.

From the moment we were cut off from the outer world, the spy mania, which had been raging fiercely enough before, became positively contagious. There is not the slightest doubt that there were spies in Paris, but I feel perfectly certain that they were not prowling about the streets, and that to have caught them one would have had to look among the personnel of the ministries. For a foreigner, unless he spoke French without the slightest accent, to have accepted such a mission, would have been akin to madness; and there were and are still few foreigners, however well they may know French, who do not betray their origin now and then by imperfect pronunciation. Besides, there was nothing to spy in the streets; nevertheless, the spy mania, as I have already said, had reached an acute crisis. The majority of the National Guard seemed to have no other occupation than to look for spies. A poor Spanish priest was arrested because he had been

three times in the same afternoon to the cobbler for the only serviceable pair of shoes he possessed. Woe to the man or woman who was ill-advised enough to take out his pocket-book in the streets. If you happened to be of studious habits, or merely inclined to sit up late, the lights peeping through the carelessly drawn curtains exposed you to a sudden visit from half a dozen ill-mannered, swaggering National Guards, your concierge was called out of his bed, while you were taken to the nearest commissary of police to explain; or, what was worse still, to the nearest military post, where the lieutenant in command made it a point to be altogether soldier-like—according to his ideas, *i.e.* brutal, rude, disgustingly familiar. You might get an apology from the police-official for having been disturbed and dragged through the streets for no earthly reason; the quasi-military man would have considered it beneath his dignity to offer one.

Of course, every now and then, one happened to meet with a gentleman who was only too anxious to atone for the imbecile “goings-on” of his men, and I was fortunate enough to do so one night. It was on the 20th of September, when the feelings of the Parisians had already been embittered by their first and not very creditable defeat under their own walls. I do not suppose there were more than a score of Englishmen in Paris, besides the Irishmen engaged in salting beef at the slaughter-house of La Villette, when, but for that gentleman, I should have been in a sore strait. Among the English, there was a groom who, at the time of the general exodus, was so dangerously ill that the doctor absolutely forbade his removal, even to a hospital. The

case had been brought under my notice, and as the poor fellow was very respectable and had been hard-working, as he had a wife and a young family besides, we not only did all we could for him, but I went to see him personally two or three times to cheer him up a bit. He was on the mend, but slowly, very slowly. He lived in one of the side streets of the Avenue de Clichy, and had lived there a good while, and the concierge of the house had her mind perfectly at rest with regard to his nationality, albeit that the fact of being an Englishman was not always a sufficient guarantee against the suspicion of being a spy on the part of the lower classes. Moreover, they would not always take the fact for granted; they were unable to distinguish an English from a German or any other accent, and, with them, to be a foreigner was necessarily to be a German, and a German could not be anything but a spy. However, in this instance, I felt no anxiety for my protégé.

Unfortunately, a few days before the closing of Paris, the concierge herself fell ill, and another one took her place. The successor was a man, and not by any means a pleasant man. There was a scowl on his face, as, in answer to his summons, I told him whither I was going; and he cast a suspicious look at a box I was carrying under my arm, which happened to contain nothing more formidable than a surgical appliance. I took no notice, however, and mounted the stairs.

My visit may have lasted between twenty minutes and half an hour. When I came out, a considerable crowd had assembled on the footway and in the road, and a dozen National Guards were ranged in a semi-circle in front of the door.

The first cry that greeted me was "Le voilà," and then a corporal advanced. "Your name, citizen," he said, in a hectoring tone, "and what brings you to this house?" I kept very cool, and told him that I would neither give him my name nor an explanation of my visit, but that if he would take me to his lieutenant or captain, I should be pleased to give both to the latter. But he would not be satisfied. "Where is the box you had in your hand? what did it contain? and what have you done with it?" he insisted. I knew that it would be useless to try and enlighten him, so I stuck to my text. Meanwhile the crowd had become very excited, so I simply repeated my request to be taken to the post.

The crowd would have willingly judged me there and then; that is, strung me up to the nearest lamp-post. If they had, not a single one among them would have been prosecuted for murder, and by the end of the siege the British Government would have considered it too late to move in the matter; besides, a great many of my countrymen would have opined that "it served me right" for remaining in Paris, when I might have made myself so comfortable in London or elsewhere. So I felt very thankful when the corporal, though very ungraciously, ordered his men to close around me and "to march." I have, since then, been twice to the Avenue de Clichy on pleasure bent; that is, to breakfast at the celebrated establishment of "le père Lathuille," and the sight of the lamp-posts there sent a cold shudder down my back.

The journey to the military post did not take long. It had been established in a former ball-room or music-hall, for at the far end of the room there was a stage,

representing, as far as I can remember, an antique palace. The floor of it was littered with straw, on which a score or so of civic warriors were lazily stretched out; while others were sitting at the small wooden tables, that had, not long ago, borne the festive "*saladier de petit bleu*." Some of the ladles with which that decoction had been stirred were still hanging from the walls; for in those neighbourhoods the love of portable property on the part of the patrons is quite Wemmickian, and the proprietors made and make it a rule to throw as little temptation as possible in the way of the former. The place looked quite sombre, though the gas was alight. There was an intolerable smell of damp straw and stale tobacco smoke.

Part of the crowd succeeded in making their way inside, notwithstanding the efforts of the National Guards. My appearance caused a certain stir among the occupants of the room; but in a few moments the captain, summoned from an apartment at the back, came upon the scene, and my preliminary trial was proceeded with at once.

The indictment of the corporal who had arrested me was brief and to the point. "This man is a foreigner who pays constant visits to another foreigner, supposed to be sick. This evening he arrived with a box under his arm which he left with his friend. The concierge has reason to suppose that there is something wrong, for he does not believe in the man's illness. He is supposed to be poor, and still he and his family are living on the fat of the land. My prisoner refused to give me his name and address, or an explanation of his visit."

.. "What have you to say, monsieur?" asked the

captain, a man of about thirty-five, evidently belonging to the better classes. I found out afterwards that his name was Garnier or Garmier, and that he was a cashier in one of the large commercial establishments in the Rue St. Martin. He was killed in the last sortie of the Parisians.

It was the first time I had been addressed that evening as "monsieur." I simply took a card from my pocket-book and gave it to him. "If that is not sufficient, some of your men can accompany me home and ascertain for themselves that I have not given a false name or address," I said.

He looked at it for a moment. "It is quite unnecessary. I know your name very well, though I have not the honour of knowing you personally. I have seen your portrait at my relatives' establishment"—he named a celebrated picture-dealer in the Rue de la Paix,—“and I ought to have recognized you at once, for it is a very striking likeness, but it is so dark here.” Then he turned to his men and to the crowd: "I will answer for this gentleman. I wish we had a thousand or so of foreign spies like him in Paris. France has no better friend than he."

I was almost as much afraid of the captain's praise as I had been of the corporal's blame, because the crowd wanted to give me an ovation; seeing which, M. Garmier invited me to stay with him a little while, until the latter should have dispersed. It was while sitting in his own room that he told me the following story.

"My principal duty, monsieur, seems to consist, not in killing Germans, but in preventing perfectly honest Frenchmen and foreigners from being killed or maimed.

Not later than the night before last, three men were brought in. They were all very powerful fellows; there was no doubt about their being Frenchmen. They did not take their arrest as a matter of course at all, but to every question I put they simply sent me to the devil. It was not the behaviour of the presumed spy, who, as a rule, is very soft spoken and conciliating until he sees that the game is up, when he becomes insulting. Still, I reflected that the violence of the three men might be a clever bit of acting also, the more that I could see for myself that they were abominably, though not speechlessly, drunk. Their offence was that they had been seen loitering in a field very close to the fortifications, with their noses almost to the ground. Do what I would, an explanation I could not get, and at last the most powerful of the trio made a movement as if to draw a knife. With great difficulty a dozen of my men succeeded in getting his coat off; and there, between his waistcoat and his shirt, was a murderously looking blade, a formidable weapon indeed.

“‘He is a Prussian spy, sure enough!’ exclaimed the roomful of guards.

“I examined the knife carefully, tried to find the name of the maker, and all at once put it to my nose. Then I took up a candle and looked more carefully still at the prisoners. ‘They are simply drunk,’ I said, ‘and the best thing you can do is to take them home.’

“‘But the knife?’ insisted the sergeant.

“‘The knife is all right,’ I answered.

“‘I should think it is all right,’ said the owner, ‘seeing that I am cutting provisions all day with it for those confounded Parisians.’

"But the guards were not satisfied with the explanation. They began to surround me. 'That was surely a sign you made to the fellow when you lifted the blade to your face, captain,' said a sergeant.

"'Not at all, friend; I was simply smelling it. And it smelt abominably of onions.' That will give you an idea, monsieur, of the life they lead me also. Still, I would ask you, as a particular favour, monsieur, not to mention your mishap to any one. As you are aware, I am not to blame; but we are in bad odour enough as it is at the Ministry of War, and we do not wish to increase our somewhat justified reputation for irresponsible rowdyism and lack of discipline."

I gave him my promise to that effect, and have not mentioned the matter until this day.

CHAPTER XIII.

The siege—The food-supply of Paris—How and what the Parisians eat and drink—Bread, meat, and wine—Alcoholism—The waste among the London poor—The French take a lesson from the alien—The Irish at La Villette—A whisper of the horses being doomed—M. Gagne—The various attempts to introduce horseflesh—The journals deliver their opinions—The supply of horseflesh as it stood in '70—The Académie des Sciences—Gelatine—Kitchen gardens on the balcony—M. Lockroy's experiment—M. Pierre Joigneux and the Englishman—If cabbages, why not mushrooms?—There is still a kitchen garden left—Cream cheese from the moon, to be fetched by Gambetta—His departure in a balloon—Nadar and Napoleon III.—Carrier-pigeons—An aerial telegraph—Offers to cross the Prussian lines—The theatres—A performance at the Cirque National—"Le Roi s'amuse," at the Théâtre de Montmartre—A déjeuner at Durand's—Weber and Beethoven—Long winter nights without fuel or gas—The price of provisions—The Parisian's good-humour—His wit—The greed of the shopkeeper—Culinary literature—More's "Utopia"—An ex-lieutenant of the Foreign Legion—He gives us a breakfast—He delivers a lecture on food—Joseph, his servant—Milk—The slender resources of the poor—I interview an employé of the State Pawnshop—Statistics—Hidden provisions—Bread—Prices of provisions—New Year's Day, and New Year's dinners—The bombardment—No more bread—The end of the siege.

I AM not a soldier, nor in the least like one; hence, I have, almost naturally, neglected to note any of the strategic and military problems involved in the campaign and the siege. But, ignorant as I am in these matters, and notwithstanding the repeated failures of General Trochu's troops to break through the lines of investment, I feel certain, on the other hand, that the Germans would have never taken Paris by storming it. Years before, Von Moltke had

expressed his opinion to that effect in his correspondence, not exactly with regard to the French capital, but with regard to any fortified centre of more than a hundred thousand inhabitants. Such an agglomeration, even if severely left alone, and only shut off from the rest of the world, falls by itself. I am giving the spirit and not the substance of his words.

Consequently, there is no need to say, that, to the mere social observer, the problems raised by the food-supply were perhaps the most interesting. Even under normal conditions, the average Parisian in his method of feeding is worth studying; he is supposed to be one of the most abstemious creatures on the civilized globe. And yet, I do not think that he consumes less alcohol than the average Englishman or German. The Frenchman's alcohol is more diluted; that is all. A drunken woman is a very rare sight, either in Paris or in the provinces; nevertheless, there is, probably, not one in a thousand women among the lower classes who drinks less than her half a bottle of wine per day; while ladies of high degree generally partake of one if not two glasses of chartreuse with their coffee, after each of the two principal meals. *Un grog Américain* is as often ordered for the lady as for the gentleman, during the evening visits to the café. I am speaking of gentlewomen by birth and education, and of the spouses of the well-to-do men, not of the members of the demi-monde and of those below them.

So far, the question of drink, which, after my visit to the wine-dépôts at Bercy, assumed an altogether different aspect to my mind. I began to wonder

whether the plethora of wine would not do as much harm as the expected scarcity of food? My fears were not groundless.

Frenchmen, especially Parisians, not only eat a great quantity of bread, but they are very particular as to its quality. I have a note showing that, during the years 1868-69, the consumption per head for every man, woman, and child amounted to a little more than an English pound per day, and that very little of this was of "second quality," though the latter was as good as that sold at many a London baker's as first. I tasted it myself, because the municipality had made a great point of introducing it to the lower classes at twopence per quartern less than the first quality. Nevertheless, the French workman would have none of it.*

Even in the humblest restaurants, the bread supplied to customers is of a superior quality; the ordinary household bread (*pain de ménage*) is only to be had by specially asking for it; the roll with the *café-au-lait* in the morning is an institution except with the very poor.

As for meat, I have an idea, in spite of all the doubts thrown upon the question by English writers, that the Parisian workman in 1870 consumed as much as his London fellow. The fact of the former having two square meals a day instead of one, is not sufficiently taken into account by the casual observer. There are few English artisans whose supper, except on Sundays, consists of anything more substantial than bread and

* Goethe, in his journey through France, noticed that the peasants who drove his carriage invariably refused to eat the soldiers' bread, which he found to his taste.—*Editor*.

cheese. The Frenchman eats meat at twelve a.m. and at six p.m. The nourishment contained in the scraps, the bones, etc., is generally lost to the Englishman: not a particle of it is wasted in France. Be that as it may, the statistics for 1858 show a consumption of close upon eight ounces (English) of fresh meat per day for every head of the population. Be it remembered that these statistics are absolutely correct, because a town-due of over a halfpenny per English pound is paid on the meat leaving the public slaughter-houses, and killed meat is taxed similarly at the city gates. Private slaughter-houses there are virtually none.

Allowing for all this, it will be seen that Paris was not much better off than other capitals would have been if threatened with a siege, except, perhaps, for the ingenuity of even the humblest French housewife in making much out of little by means of vegetables, fruit, and cunningly prepared sauces, for which, nevertheless, butter, milk, lard, etc., were wanted, which commodities were as likely to fail as all other things. Nor must one forget to mention the ingenuity displayed in the public slaughter-houses themselves, in utilizing every possible scrap of the slaughtered animals for human food. I had occasion, not very long ago (1883), to go frequently, and for several weeks running, to one of the poorest quarters in London. I often made the journey on foot, for I am ashamed to say that, until then, the East End was far more unknown to me than many an obscure town in France, Italy, Germany, and Spain. The clever remark of a French sociologist that "the battle of life is fought below the belt," holds especially good with regard to the lower classes. Well, I may unhesitatingly say that in no country

are the poor left in greater ignorance with regard to cheap and nourishing food than in England, if I am to judge by London. The French, the German, the Italian, the Spanish poor, have a dozen inexpensive and succulent dishes of which the English poor know absolutely nothing; and still those very dishes figure on the tables of the well-to-do, and of fashionable restaurants, as entrées under more or less fantastic names. Is the English working man so utterly devoid of thrift and of common sense, is his contempt for the foreigner so great as to make him refuse to take a lesson from the latter? I think not. I fancy it will depend much on the manner in which the lesson is conveyed. A little less board-school work and Sunday-school teaching, fewer Bible classes, and a good many practical cooking-classes would probably meet the case.

The French, though aware of their incontestable superiority in the way of preparing food, did not disdain to take a lesson from the alien. They clearly foresaw the fate in store for the cattle penned in the squares and public gardens, if compelled to remain there under existing conditions, and with the inclement season close at hand; consequently, the authorities enlisted the services of Mr. Wilson, an Irish gentleman who had been residing in Paris for a number of years, and whose experience in the salted-provision trade seemed to them very likely to yield most satisfactory results. Up till then, only thirty head of cattle had been submitted to his process, from that moment the number is considerably increased, and it becomes apparent that, in a short while, there will be few live oxen, sheep, or pigs left in Paris, though, as yet, we are

only in the beginning of October. Under Mr. Wilson's able management, half a hundred Irishmen are at work for many, many hours a day at the slaughterhouse in La Villette, whither flock the Parisians, at any rate the privileged ones, to watch the preliminaries to the régime of salt-junk which is staring them in the face. The fodder thus economized will go to the horses, although there is a whisper in the air that one eminent savant has recommended their immediate slaughter and salting also. Of course, such as are wanted for military purposes will be exempted from this holocaust on the altar of patriotism. M. Gagne, who has already provided the Parisians with amusement for years, in his capacity as a perpetual candidate for parliamentary honours, does not stop at hippophagy; he seriously proposes anthropophagy. "A human being over sixty is neither useful nor ornamental," he exclaimed at a public meeting; "and to prove that I mean what I say, I am willing to give myself as food to my sublime and suffering townsmen." Poor fellow! as mad as a March hare, but a man of education and with an infinite fund of sympathy for humanity. He was but moderately provided for at the best of times; his income was derived from some property in the provinces, and, as a matter of course, the investment of Paris stopped his supplies of funds from that quarter. He was of no earthly use in the besieged city, but he refused to go. He had a small but very valuable collection of family plate, which went bit by bit to the Mint, not to feed himself but to feed others, for he was never weary of well-doing. He reminded one irresistibly of Balzac's hero, "le Père Goriot," parting with his treasures to supply his ungrateful daughters, for the

Parisians were ungrateful to him. Mad as he was, no man in possession of all his mental faculties could have been more sublime.

Whatever the question of human flesh as food may have been to the Parisians, that of horseflesh was by no means new to them. Since '66, various attempts had been made to introduce it on a large scale, but, for once in a way, they were logical in their objections to it. "It is all very well," wrote a paper, devoted to the improvement of the humbler classes,—“it is all very well for a few savants to sit round a well-appointed table to feast upon the succulent parts of a young, tender, and perfectly healthy horse, especially if the steaks are ‘aux truffes,’ and the kidneys stewed in ‘Madeira;’ but that young, tender, and perfectly healthy horse would cost more than an equally tender, young, and perfectly healthy bullock or cow. So, where is the advantage? In order to obtain that advantage, horses only fit for the knacker’s yard, not fit for human food, would have to be killed, and the hard-working artisan with his non-vitiated taste, who does not even care for venison or game when it happens to be ‘high,’ would certainly not care for a superannuated charger to be set before him. You might just as well ask an unsophisticated cannibal to feast upon an invalid. The best part of ‘the warrior on the shelf’ is his wooden leg or his wooden arm; the best part of the superannuated charger is his skin or his hoof, with or without the shoe; and no human being, whether cannibal or not, can be expected to make a timber-yard, a tanner’s yard, or an old-iron and rag store of his stomach, even to please faddists.”

As a consequence, only two millions of pounds of

horseflesh were "produced" during the first three years succeeding the publication of that article (1866-69); but it is more than doubtful whether a sixteenth part of it was consumed as human food—with a knowledge on the part of the consumers. And during those three years, as if to prove the writer's words, the public were being constantly fortified in their dislike with official reports of the seizure of diseased horses on their way to the four specially appointed slaughter-houses. I remember, that in one week, twenty-four animals were thus confiscated by the sanitary inspectors, "the flesh of which," added the *Moniteur*, "would have probably found its way to the tables of the better class Parisians, in the shape of Arles, Lorraine, or German sausages. These commodities," it went on, "are never offered by the manufacturer to the experienced proprietors of the ham and beef shops (*charcutiers*), but to fruiterers, grocers, vendors of so-called dainties, and dealers in preserved provisions." The article had the effect of arousing the suspicion of the better classes as well as of the poorer.

The number of "horse-butchers" had decreased by four during the four years that had elapsed since their first establishment with the Government's sanction, and the remaining eighteen were not very prosperous when the siege brought the question to the fore once more. The public could not afford to be positively hostile to the scheme, but the assertion of the rare advocates of the system, that they were enthusiastic, is altogether beside the truth. They had to make the best of a bad game, that was all. It is a very curious, but positive fact, nevertheless, that I have heard Parisians speak favourably afterwards of dog's and cat's flesh, even of

rats baked in a pie; I have heard them say that, for once in a way, even under ordinary circumstances, they would not mind partaking of those dishes: I have never heard them express the same goodwill towards horseflesh. Of course, I am alluding to those who affected no partisanship, either one way or the other. One thing is very certain, though: at the end of the siege the sight of a cat or dog was a rarity in Paris, while by the official reports there were thirty thousand horses left.

Meanwhile, the Académie de Sciences is attracting notice by the reports of its sittings, in which the question of food is the only subject discussed. Professor Dorderone reads a paper on the utilization of beef and mutton fat; and he communicates a new process with regard to kidney fat, which, up till then, had withstood the attempts of the most celebrated chefs for culinary purposes. He professes to have discovered the means of doing away with the unpleasant taste and smell which have hitherto militated against its use, he undertakes to give it the flavour and aroma of the best butter from Brittany and Normandy. M. Richard, the maire of La Villette, attempts similar experiments with animal offal, which M. Dumas, the great savant, declares highly satisfactory. M. Riche, one of the superior officials of the Mint, transforms bullock's blood into black puddings, which are voted superior to those hitherto made with pig's blood. The nourishing properties of gelatine are demonstrated in an equally scientific manner, and the Académie des Sciences gradually becomes the rendez-vous of the fair ones of Paris, who come to take lessons in the culinary art.

"Mais, monsieur," says one, "maintenant que nous avons du beurre, veuillez nous dire d'où viendront nos épinards?" *

"Don't let that trouble you, madame," is the answer; "if you will honour us with your presence next week, one of our learned friends from the Jardin des Plantes will tell you how to grow salads, and perhaps asparagus, on your balcony and in front of your windows, in less than a fortnight."

The learned professor is not trying to mystify his charming interlocutor; he honestly believes in what he says: and, a week later, when "the friend from the Jardin des Plantes" has spoken, there is a wonderful run on all the seed-shops near the Châtelet, every one tries to borrow flower-pots from his neighbours, and barrow-loads of mould are being trundled in long lines into Paris. Wherever one goes, the eye meets careful housewives bending over wooden boxes on the balconies; M. Philippe Lockroy, the eminent actor and dramatist, the father of M. Edouard Lockroy, the future minister of the Third Republic, asks seriously why we should not revive the hanging gardens of Semiramis, and sets the example by converting his fifth floor balcony into a market garden, to the discomfiture of his son, who finds his erstwhile bedroom converted into a storehouse for tools and less agreeable matter. I may mention that M. Lockroy did not abandon his project after a mere fleeting attempt, nor when the necessity for it had disappeared, but that at the hour I write (1883) he has taken a prize for pears grown on that same balcony.

* "Mettre du beurre dans ses épinards," means, figuratively, to increase one's comforts.—EDITOR.

The mania spreads, and every one becomes, for the time being, a market-gardener in chambers. Even M. Pierre Joigneux, the well-known horticulturist, and equally clever writer, is bitten with it. That the thing was perfectly feasible, was proved subsequently by M. Lockroy, but the latter did not imitate the nigger who dug up the potatoes an hour after he had planted them, to see if they were growing. That thoroughly inexperienced persons should have indulged in such wild fancies is perhaps not to be wondered at; but M. Joigneux was not one of these, yet he provided an Englishman, who had come to propose the experiment to him, with all the necessary funds. "I was perfectly certain that I should never see him again," he said afterwards; but, with all due deference, we may take this as a shamefaced denial of his credulity. "Contrary to my expectations," M. Joigneux went on, when he told us the tale a few nights afterwards at the Café de la Paix—he lived in the Rue du 4 Septembre,—“my Englishman did come back, accompanied by a porter who carried the requisite material. I did not interfere with him in the least, but merely watched him. I knew that in England they did produce ‘greenstuff’ in that way; though I was also aware of the difference between a few blades and a serious crop.”

Others, more ingenious still, began to argue that if it was possible to produce vegetables in a fortnight by means of light and a few handfuls of mould, it could not be difficult to produce mushrooms with a much thicker layer of mould and in the darkness of a cellar.

Fortunately, there is, as yet, a very decent kitchen-garden to fall back upon. It lies between the forti-

fications and the forts; it has been somewhat pillaged at first, but the authorities have organized several companies of labourers from among those whom they have not been able to provide with arms, and those who do not dig or delve keep watch against depredation. They have a very simple uniform—a black kepi with crimson piping, and a crimson belt round their waists. They are exposed to a certain danger, or every now and then a stray German bullet lays one of them low, but, upon the whole, their lot is not a hard one.

“We have still nearly everything we want,” writes a facetious journalist; “and now that good and obliging fellow, Gambetta, is going to fetch us some cream cheese from the moon for our dessert.”

In fact, during the last few days, we have been informed of the Minister of the Interior’s impending departure for Tours by balloon on the 7th of October, and by twelve o’clock on that day the little Place St. Pierre, right on the heights of Montmartre, is simply black with people. “The great statesman,” the “hero who is to rouse the provinces to unheard-of efforts for the deliverance of the sacred soil of France from the polluting presence of the Teutonic barbarian,” has not arrived yet when I edge my way through the crowd, accompanied by an officer on General Vinoy’s staff, who is a near relative of mine. With the recollection of my adventure in the Avenue de Clichy fresh upon me, I would not have ventured to come by myself. There is a military post on the Place St. Pierre, and I am wondering whether it will turn out to pay honours to “the great statesman;” and whether Nadar, the famous Nadar, whom I can see towering

above the crowd, and giving instructions, will treat Gambetta with the same scant courtesy he once treated Louis-Napoléon, when the latter went to see the ascent of his balloon, "Le Géant," from the Champ-de-Mars. Nadar's behaviour on that occasion reminds one of Elizabeth's with the wife of Bishop Parker. "'Madam,'" said the queen, "I may not call you, and 'mistress' I am loth to call you." Nadar was too fervent a republican to call Louis-Napoléon "Majesty;" he was too well-bred to insult his guest by addressing him as "Monsieur:" so, when he saw the sovereign advancing, he backed towards his car, and, before he could come up with him, gave orders to "let go."

I do not know whether Gambetta came in a carriage. It did not make its appearance on the Place St. Pierre; he probably left it, like meaner mortals, at the foot of the very steep hill. The cheering was immense, and he took it as if to the manner born. He was accompanied by M. Spuller, who was to take the journey with him, and who, even at that time, bore a curious likeness to Mr. Spurgeon. M. Spuller did not appear to claim any of the cheers for himself, for he kept perfectly stolid. Gambetta, on the other hand, bowed repeatedly, at which Nadar grinned. Nadar was always honest, if outspoken. He did not seem particularly pleased with the business in hand, and was evidently determined to get it over as soon as possible. Gambetta was still standing up, bowing and waving his hands, when Nadar gave the order to "let go" the ropes, and the dictator fell back into the lap of his companion. The balloon rose rather quickly, and about nine that same night we had the news that the

balloon had safely landed in the Department of the Oise, about twelve miles from Clermont.

From that moment, the ascent of a balloon with its car, containing one or two, sometimes three, wicker cages of carrier-pigeons, becomes a favourite spectacle with the Parisians, who would willingly see the departure of a dozen per day. For each departure means not only the conveyance of a budget of news from the besieged city to the provinces, it means the return of the winged messengers with perhaps hopeful tidings that the provinces are marching to the rescue. I am bound to say, at the same time, that the terrible anxiety for such rescue did not arise solely from a wish to escape further physical sufferings and privations. Three-fourths of the Parisians would have been willing to put up with worse for the sake of one terrible defeat inflicted upon the Germans by their levies or by those in the provinces.

But though the gas companies did wonders, fifty-two balloons having been inflated by them during the siege, they could do no more. Nevertheless, the experiments continue: the brothers Goddard have established their head-quarters at the Orleans Railway; MM. Dartois and Yon at the Northern; Admiral Labrousse, who has already invented an ingenious gun-carriage, is now busy upon a navigable balloon; the Government grants a subsidy of forty thousand francs to M. Dupuy de Lôme to assist him in his research; and at the Grand Hôtel there is a permanent exhibition of appliances for navigating the air under the direction of MM. Horeau and Saint-Felix. The public flock to them, and for a moment there is the hope that if we ourselves cannot come and go as free

as birds, there will be at least a means of permanent communication with the outer world that way. M. Granier has proposed to make an aerial telegraph without the support of poles. The wire is to be enclosed in a gutta-percha tube filled with hydrogen gas, which will enable it to keep its altitude a thousand or fifteen hundred metres above the earth. The cable is to be paid out by balloons. M. Gaston Tissandier, a well-known authority in such matters, looks favourably upon the experiment; but, alas, it comes to nothing, and we have to fall back upon less ingenious, more commonplace means.

In other words, we are offering tempting fees to plucky individuals who will attempt to cross the Prussian lines. Several do make the attempt, and for a week or so the newspapers and the walls swarm with the advertisements of a private firm who will forward and receive despatches at the rate of ten francs per letter. A good many messengers depart; a good many return almost at once, finding the task impossible; those that do not return have presumably been shot by the Prussians, for not a single one reached his destination.

Then we begin to turn our thoughts to the sheep-dog as a carrier of messages, or rather to the smuggler's dog, thousands of which are known to exist on the Belgian and Swiss frontiers. The postal authorities go even so far as to promise two hundred francs for every batch of despatches if delivered within twenty-four hours of the animal's departure from his starting-place, and fifty francs less for every twenty-four hours' delay; but the animals fall a prey to the Prussian sentries, not one of them succeeds in reaching the

French outposts. The carrier-pigeon is all we have left.

Still, we are not discouraged; and in less than a month after the investment, the Parisians begin to clamour for their favourite amusement—the theatre. There are, of course, many divergencies of opinion with regard to the fitness of the measure, and we get some capital articles on the subject, studded with witty sentences and relieved by historical anecdotes, showing that, whatever they may not know, French journalists have an inexhaustible fund of parallels when it becomes a question of the playhouse. “In ’92 the Lillois went peacefully to the theatre while the shells were pouring into the devoted city. Why should we be less courageous and less cheerful than they?” writes one. “Nero was fiddling while Rome was burning,” writes another, “but Paris is not on fire yet; and, if it were, the Nero who might be blamed for the catastrophe is at Wilhelmshöhe, where, we may be sure, he will not eat a mouthful less for our pangs of hunger. If he does not fiddle, it is because, like his famous uncle, he has no ear for music.”

“Whatever may happen,” writes M. Francisque Sarcey in the *Gaulois*, “art should be considered superior to all things; the theatre is not a more unseemly pleasure under the circumstances than the perusal of a good book; and it is just in the darkest and saddest hours of his life that a man needs a diversion which will, for a little while, at least, prevent him from brooding upon his sufferings.”

To which “Thomas Grimm,” of *Le Petit Journal*, who is on the opposite side, replies: “If I may be

allowed to intervene in so grave a question, I have no hesitation in saying that the time for singing and amusing ourselves has not arrived. It seems to me very doubtful whether the spectators would not be constantly thinking of scenes enacted in other spots than behind the footlights. And in such moments, when they might concentrate the whole of their attention on the pleasant fiction enacted before them, the sound of the cannon thundering in the distance would more than once recall them to the reality."

The ice was virtually broken, and on Sunday, the 23rd of October, the Cirque National opened its doors for a concert. During the last five years, as my readers will perceive by the almost involuntary break in these notes, I had not been so assiduous a frequenter of the theatre and the concert hall as I used to be, and though I was during the siege overburdened with business, on the nature of which I need not dwell here, I felt that I wanted some amusement. The evenings were becoming chilly, one of my cherished companions was doing his duty with General Vinoy, and, though I had practically unlimited means at my command for my necessities, and am by no means sparing of money at any time, I grudged the price of fuel. As yet, wood only cost six francs the hundred-weight, but it was such wood! If the ancient proverb-coiner had been seated in front of the hearth in which it was trying to burn, he might have hesitated to write that "there is no smoke without a fire." The friendly chats by the fireside, which I had enjoyed for many years, had almost entirely ceased. Nearly all my familiars were "on duty," and the few hours they could snatch were either spent in bed, to rest from the

fatigue and discomforts of the night, or else at the cafés and restaurants, where the news, mostly of an anecdotal kind, was circulating freely. In fact, the cafés and restaurants, as long as there was fuel and light, were more amusing during the siege than I had known them to be at any time. Perhaps the most amusing feature of these nightly gatherings was the presentation of the bill after dinner. The prices charged at the Café de Paris in its palmiest days were child's play compared to the actual ones. I have preserved the note of a breakfast for two at Durand's.

						frs.
Hors d'Œuvres (Radishes and Sausage)	..	..	..	..	..	10
Entrée (Navarin aux Pommes)	..	..	..	..	..	18
Filet de Bœuf aux Champignons	..	..	..	..	..	24
Omelette Sucrée (3 œufs)	..	..	..	..	..	12
Café	..	..	..	..	..	1
1 Bouteille de Mâcon	..	..	..	..	..	6
Total frs.						71

The bread and butter were included in the hors-d'œuvres, and I may remark that the entrée and the filet de bœuf were only for one. Durand's was the cheapest of the five restaurants which still retained their ordinary clientèle. Bignon, Voisin, the Cafés de la Paix and Anglais were much dearer. The latter gave its patrons white bread as late as the 16th of December.

I made up my mind, then, to go to that concert at the Cirque National, and to as many of the entertainments as might be offered. I have rarely seen such a crowd outside a theatre; and I doubt whether the fact of the performance being for a charitable purpose had much to do with it, because, if so, those who were denied admission might have handed their money

at the box-office, but they did not, they only gave the reverse of their blessing. If charity it was, it did not want to end at home that afternoon.

The entertainment began with a charity sermon by the Abbé Duquesnay, a hardworking priest in one of the thickly populated quarters of Paris. I would willingly give another ten francs to hear a similar sermon. I am positive that the Abbé had taken Laurence Sterne for his model. I have never heard anything so brilliant in my life. Not the slightest attempt at thrusting religion down one's throat. A good many quotations on the advantages of well-doing, notably that of Shakespeare, admirably translated, probably by the speaker himself. Then the following to wind up with: "I do not know of a single curmudgeon who has ever been converted into what I should call 'a genuine alms-giver,' by myself, or by my fellow-priests. When he did give, he looked upon the gift as a loan to the Lord in virtue of that gospel precept which you all know. Now, my good friends, allow me to give you my view of that sentence: God is just, and no doubt He will repay the loan with interest, but after He has settled the account, He will indict the lender before the Highest tribunal for usury. Consequently, if you have an idea of placing your money in that way with God as a security, you had better keep it in your purses."

After this, the orchestra, nine-tenths of whose members are in uniform, performs the overture to "*La Muette de Portici*" (Masaniello); Padeloup conducting. Padeloup is a naturalized German, whose real name is Wolfgang, but, in this instance, the public do not seem to mind it; nor is there any protest

against the names of two other Germans on the programme, Weber's and Beethoven's. On the contrary, the latter's composition is frantically encored. I believe it is the symphony in *C Minor*, for it has been wedded to Victor Hugo's words, and it is Madame Ugalde who sings the stirring hymn "Patria."

There is a story connected with this hymn, which is not generally known. I give it as it was told to me a day or so afterwards by Auber, who had it from the lips of Joseph Dartigues, who, at the time of its occurrence, was the musical critic of the *Journal des Débats*.

Hugo was very young then, and one night he went to the Théâtre de Madame, which has since become the Gyninase. The piece was one of Scribe's—"La Chatte métamorphosée en Femme;" and Jenny Vertpré, whom our grandfathers applauded at the St. James Theatre in the thirties, was to play the principal part. Still, our poet was not particularly struck with the plot, dialogue, or lyrics; but, all at once, he sat upright in his seat, at the strains of a "Hindoo invocation." When the music ceased, Hugo left the house, humming the notes to himself. He was very fond of music, though he could never reconcile himself to have his dramas appropriated by the librettists, and gave his consent but very reluctantly. Next morning, he met Dartigues on the Boulevard des Italiens, then the Boulevard de Gand. He told him what he had heard, and recommended the critic to go and judge for himself. "It is so utterly different from the idiotic stuff one generally hears." Dartigues acted upon the recommendation. A few days

later, they met once more. "Did you go and hear that music, at the Théâtre de Madame?" asked Hugo.

"Yes," was the reply. "I am not surprised at your liking it; it is Beethoven's."

Curious to relate, Hugo had not as much as heard the name of the great German composer. The acquaintance with classical music was very limited in the France of those days. But Hugo never forgot the symphony, and, later on, in his exile, he wrote the words I had just heard.

The impulse has been given, and from that moment the walls of Paris display as many bills of theatrical and musical entertainments as if the Germans were not at the gates. I go to nearly all, and, to my great regret, hear a great many actors and actresses who have received favours and honours at the hand of Louis-Napoléon vie with one another in casting obloquy upon him and his reign. One of the few honourable exceptions is M. Got, who, being invited to recite Hugo's "Châtiments," emphatically refuses "to kick a man when he is down."

At the Théâtre-Français, there is a special box—the erstwhile Imperial box—for the convalescents, who are being tended in the theatre itself.

But though I went to hear Melchisedec and Taillade, Caron and Berthelier, there is one performance that stands out vividly from the rest in my memory. It was a representation of Hugo's "Le Roi s'amuse" ("The Fool's Revenge"), at the theatre at Montmartre. Under ordinary circumstances, I should probably not have gone so far afield to see any piece, not even that which was reputed to be *the*

masterpiece of Victor Hugo, but, in this instance, the temptation was too great. The play had only been performed in Paris once—on the 22nd of November, 1832; next day it was suspended by order of the Government. Alexandre Dumas the elder, Théophile Gautier, Nestor Roqueplan, all of whom were present on that memorable night, had spoken to me of its beauties. I had often promised myself to read it, and had never done so. If I had, I should probably not have gone to Montmartre that night, lest my illusions should be disturbed. The performance was intended as a tribute to the genius of the poet, but also as an act of defiance on the part of the young Republic to the preceding régimes; though why it was not revived during the Second Republic I have never been able to make out clearly.

My companion and I toiled up the steep Rue des Martyrs, and it was evident to us, when we got to the Place du Théâtre, that something unusual was going on, for the little square was absolutely black with people. We managed, however, to elbow our way through, and to get two stalls. The house was dimly lighted by gas, the deficiency made up, as far as I could see, by lamps in the auditorium, by candles on the stage. There was not an empty seat anywhere. The overture, consisting of snatches from "*Rigoletto*," was received with deafening applause, and then the curtain rose upon the magnificent hall in the Louvre of François I., with the king surrounded by his courtiers and his favourites. By his side hobbled Triboulet, his evil genius, as Hugo has represented him.

My disappointment was great. I had come to

admire, not expecting magnificent scenery, gorgeous costumes, or transcendent acting, but a spirit of reverence for the immortal creation of a great poet. At that time I was not sufficiently familiar with provincial art in England to be able to picture a performance of Shakespeare except under conditions such as prevail in the best of London theatres. I had read accounts, however, of strolling companies and their doings, but I doubt whether the humblest would have been guilty of such utter iconoclasm in the spirit as well as in the letter as I witnessed that night. It was not comic, it was absolutely painful. It was not the glazed calico doing duty for brocade, that made me wince; it was not the anti-macassar replacing lace that made me gasp for breath: it was the miserable failure of those behind the footlights, as well as of those in front, to grasp the meaning of the simplest line. They had been told that this play was an indictment, not against a libertine king, but against generations and generations of rulers to whom debauch was as the air they breathed. And, in order to make the lesson more striking, Saint-Vallier was represented as an old dotard, Triboulet as a pander, the king as an amorous Bill Sykes, and Triboulet's daughter as an hysterical young woman who virtually gloried in her dishonour. I had seen "Orphée aux Enfers," "La Belle Hélène," and "La Grande Duchesse;" I had heard Schneider at her best and at her worst; I had heard women of birth and breeding titter, and gentlemen roar, at allusions which would make a London coal-heaver blush;—I had never seen anything so downright degrading as this performance. And when, at last, the *dramatis personæ* gathered round a bust of Hippo-

crates—the best substitute for one of Victor Hugo they could find,—and one of them recited “*Les Châtiments*,” I left, hoping that I should never see such an exhibition again. It was one of the first deliberately planned lessons in “king-hatred” I had heard. The disciples looked to me very promising, and the Commune, when it came, was not such a surprise to me, after all. Before then, I had come to the conclusion that the *barbarians* outside the gates of Paris were less to be feared than those inside—the former, at any rate, believed in a chief; the motto of the others was, “*Ni Dieu, ni maître*.”

Meanwhile, the long winter nights have come. The stock of gas is pretty well exhausted, or tantamount to it; wood, similar to that I have described already, has risen to seven francs fifty centimes the hundredweight. Beef and mutton have entirely disappeared from the butchers' stalls. Rats are beginning to be sold at one franc apiece, and eggs cost thirty francs a dozen. Butter has risen to fifty francs the half-kilogramme (about seventeen ozs., English). Carrots and potatoes fetch, the first, forty francs, the second, twenty francs, the peck (English). I am being told that milk is still to be had, but I have neither tasted nor seen any for ten days. Personally, I do not feel the want of it; but in my visits to some of the poor in my neighbourhood I am confronted by the fact of little ones, between two and three years of age, being fed on bread soaked in wine, and suffering from various ailments in consequence.

I am pursuing some inquiries at the various mairies, and find that the death-rate for October has reached nearly three thousand above the corresponding month

of the previous year. I am furthermore told that not a third of this increase is due to the direct results of the siege—that is, to death on the battle-field, or resulting from wounds received there; typhus and low fever, anæmia, etc., are beginning to ravage the inhabitants. Worse than all, the authorities have made a mistake with regard to the influx of strangers. The seventy-five thousand aliens and Parisians who have left at the beginning of the siege have been replaced by three times that number, so that Paris has virtually one hundred and fifty thousand more mouths to feed than it counted upon. "All the women, children, and old men," says one of my informants, "ought to have been removed to some provincial centre; it would have cost no more, and would have left those who remained free for a more energetic defence. And you will scarcely believe it, monsieur, but here is the register to prove it; there have been nearly four hundred marriages celebrated during the past month. It looks to me like tying the Gordian knot with a vengeance."

One thing I cannot help remarking amidst all this suffering; the Parisian never ceases to be witty. Among my pensioners there was the wife of a hard-working, frugal upholsterer, whose trade was absolutely at a standstill. He was doing his duty on the fortifications; she was keeping the home together on the meagre pittance allowed to her husband by the Government, and the rations doled out to her every morning. The youngest of her three children was barely four weeks old. One morning, to my great surprise, I found two infants in her lap. "C'est comme ça, monsieur," she said, with a wan smile. "André found it on a doorstep in the Rue Mogador, and he

brought it home, saying, 'It won't make much difference; Nature laid the table for two infants.'"

The Parisian is a born loungeur. Balzac had said, "*Flâner est une science, c'est la gastronomie de l'œil.*" Seeing that it is the only gastronomy they can enjoy under the circumstances, the Parisians take to it with a vengeance during those months of October and November, and their favourite halting-places are the rare provision-shops that have still a fowl, or a goose, or a pigeon in their windows. The sight of a turkey causes an obstruction, and the would-be purchaser of a rabbit is mobbed like the winner of a great prize in the lottery. Nine times out of ten the negotiations do not go beyond the preliminary stage of inquiring the price, because vendors are obstinate, though polite.

"How much for the rabbit?" says the supposed Nabob, for the very fact of inquiring implies wealth.

"Forty-five francs, monsieur."

"You are joking. Forty-five francs! It's simply ridiculous," protests the other one.

"I am not joking, monsieur; and I cannot take a farthing less."

The would-be diner goes away; but he has scarcely gone a few steps, when the dealer calls him back. "Listen, monsieur," he cries.

Hope revives in the other's breast. His fancy conjures up a savoury rabbit-stew, and he leaps rather than walks the distance that separates him from the stall.

"*Ventre affamé a des oreilles pour sûr,*" says a bystander.*

"Well, how much are you going to take off?"

* The proverb is, "*Ventre affamé n'a pas d'oreilles.*"—EDITOR.

"I am not going to take off a penny, but I thought I might tell you that this rabbit plays the drum."

Some of the jokes, though, were not equally innocent, and revealed a callousness on the part of the perpetrators which it is not pleasant to have to record. True, they did not affect the very poor, whose poverty was, as it were, a guarantee against them; but it is a moot point whether the well-to-do should be shamelessly robbed by the well-to-do tradesman for no other reason than to increase the latter's hoard. Greed, that abominable feature in the character of the French middle-classes, showed itself again and again under circumstances which ought to have suspended its manifestations for the time being.

I have already noted that one member of the Académie des Sciences had insisted upon the benefits to be derived from the extraction of gelatine from bones. A great number of equally learned men simply scouted the idea as preposterous, notably Dr. Gannal, the well-known authority on embalming. His opposition went so far as to prompt him to submit his family and himself to the "ordeal," as he called it. At the end of a week, all of them were reduced to mere skeletons; and then, but then only, Dr. Gannal sent for his learned colleagues to attest the effects. The drowning man will proverbially cling to a straw; consequently, some Parisians took to gelatine, undeterred by the clever lampoons, one of which I quote:—

*"L'inventeur de la gélatine,
A la chair préférant les os;
Veut désormais que chacun dine
Avec un jeu de dominos."*

They, however, did so with their eyes open, and as

a last resource: not so those who were imposed upon, and induced to part with their money for cleverly imitated calves' heads, which, as a matter of course, merely left a gluish substance at the bottom of the saucepan, to the indignation of anxious housewives and irate cooks, one of whom took her revenge one day by clapping the saucepan and its contents on the head of the fraudulent dealer, and, while the latter was in an utterly defenceless state, triumphantly stalking away with two very respectable fowls. The shopkeeper had the impudence to seek redress in a court of law. The judge would not so much as listen to him.

Another curious feature of the siege was the sudden passion developed by cooks for what I must be permitted to call culinary literature. As a rule, the French cordon-bleu, and even her less accomplished sisters, do not go for their recipes to cookery-books; theirs is knowledge gained from actual experience: but at that period such works as, "*Le Livre de Cuisine de Mademoiselle Margu rite*," "*La Cuisini re Pratique*," etc., were to be found on every kitchen table. The cooks had simply taken to them in despair, not believing a single word of their contents, but on the chance of finding a hint that might lend itself to the provisions placed at their disposal. I refrain from giving their criticisms on the authors: the forcibleness of their language could only be done justice to by such masters of realism as M. Zola. I have spoken before now of the uniform good temper of the Parisians under the most trying circumstances; I beg to append a rider, excluding cooks, but especially female ones. "*C'est comme si on essayait d'enseigner le patinage   la femme aux jambes de bois du boulevard*," said the ministering

angel to one of my bachelor friends. One day, to my great surprise, on calling on him I found him reading. He was not much given to poring over books, though his education had been a very good one.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"I am reading More's 'Utopia,'" he said, putting down the volume.

"What do you mean?" I remarked, pointing to the cover, displaying a young woman bending over stew-pans.

"This is More's 'Utopia,' to me at present. It speaks of things which will never be realized; *suprême de volaille*, *tournedos à la poivrade*, and so forth. The book wants another chapter," he went on, "a chapter treating of the food of besieged cities. The Dutch might have written it centuries ago: at Leyden they were on the point of eating their left arms, while defending themselves with their right; they could have told us how to stew the former. If one could add a chapter to that effect, the book might go through a hundred new editions, and the writer might make a fortune. It would not do him much good, for he would be expected to live up to his precepts, and not touch a morsel of that beautiful kangaroo or elephant I saw yesterday on the Boulevard Haussmann."

At that moment a mutual acquaintance came in. He had been a lieutenant in the Foreign Legion, and lost his right foot before Constantine. Noticing our host's doleful looks, he inquired the cause, and we got another spoken essay on the difficulties of the situation as connected with the food supply. I may add that, wherever a few men were gathered together, this became invariably the absorbing topic of conversation.

The ex-lieutenant laughed outright. "You are altogether labouring under a mistake; there is plenty of food of a kind left, though I admit with you that the Parisian does not know how to prepare it."

"Will you teach them?" was the query.

"I will not, because they would simply sneer at me. Feeding is simply a matter of prejudice; and, to prove it to you, I will give you a breakfast to-morrow morning which you will appreciate. But I am not going to tell you of what it consists, nor will I do so until two days after the entertainment."

We accepted the invitation, though I must confess that I was not eager about it. Nevertheless, next day, about one, we were seated at the hospitable board of our ex-lieutenant, who, three weeks before, had dismissed his female servant and was waited upon by an old trooper, with one arm. Though perfectly respectful, Joseph received us with a broad grin, which, as the repast progressed, was contracted into a proud smile. He had evidently co-operated with his master in the concoction of the dishes, all of which, I am bound to say, were very savoury. In fact, I was like that new tenant of the house haunted by a laughing ghost. But for the knowledge that there was something uncanny about it, I would have been intensely gratified and amused. Our host told us, with great glee, that Joseph had been up since a quarter-past four that morning; and that before five he was at the Halles. As we could distinctly taste the onions in the stew that served as an entrée, and as the potatoes round the next dish were visible to the naked eye, we concluded that the old trooper had got up so early to buy vegetables, and were correspondingly grateful.

There was no mystery whatsoever about the fish, and about the entremets. The first was dry cod—but with a sauce such as I had never tasted before or have since. The latter was a delicious dish of sweet macaroni, fit to set before a prince. I repeat, but for my knowledge that there was something uncanny about that meal, I would have asked permission to come every day. Yet I felt almost equally convinced that, with regard to one dish, we had been doubly mystified—that they were larks, which our host had managed to procure somehow, though I missed the bones.

True to his word, our *Amphitryon* revealed the real ingredients of the menu forty-eight hours after. The entrée had been composed of very small mice—field-mice, I think we call them in England; the second dish was rat. Not a single ounce of butter or lard had been used in the sauces or for the macaroni. The dried cod was still plentiful enough to be had at any grocer's or salted-provision shop. Instead of butter, Joseph used horse-marrow. The horse-butchers sold the bones ridiculously cheap, not having the slightest idea what to do with them. The mice, Joseph caught round about the fortifications, whither he went almost every day. The rats he caught in the cellarage of the Halles. He had a cousin there in a large way of business, and access to the underground part of the market was never refused to him.

"From what you have tasted at my rooms," concluded the ex-lieutenant, "you will easily see that our vaunted superiority as cooks is so much humbug. The dish of cod I gave you, and which you liked so much, may be seen on the table of the poorest household in Holland and Flanders at least once, sometimes twice,

a week, especially in North-Brabant, where the good Catholics scarcely ever eat anything else on Fridays. The sauce, which they call a mustard-sauce, would naturally be better if made with butter, but you could not taste the difference if the cook takes care to sprinkle a little saffron in her fat or marrow. Saffron is a great thing in cooking, and still our best chefs know little or nothing about it. But for the saffron, you would have detected a slight odour of musk in the entrée you took to be larks. You may almost disguise anything with saffron, except dog's-flesh. Listen to what I tell you, and in a month or so, perhaps before, you'll admit the truth of my words. The moment horseflesh fails, the Parisians will fall back upon dogs, turning up their noses at cats and rats, though both are a thousand times superior to the latter. In saying this, I am virtually libelling the cat and the rat; for 'the friend of man,' be he cooked in ever so grand a way, is always a detestable dish. His flesh is oily and flabby; stew him, fry him, do what you will, there is always a flavour of castor oil about him. The only way to minimize that flavour, to make him palatable, is to salt, or rather to pepper him; that is, to cut him up in slices, and leave them for a fortnight, bestrewing them very liberally with peppercorns. Then, before 'accommodating' them finally, put them into boiling water for a while, and throw the water away.

"No such compromises are necessary with 'the fauna of the tiles,' who, with his larger-sized victim, the rat, has been the most misprized and misjudged of all animals, from the culinary point of view. Stewed puss is by far more delicious than stewed rabbit. The

flesh of the former tastes less pungent than that of the latter, and is more tender. As for the prejudice against cat, well, the Germans have the same prejudice against rabbit, and while I was in the Foreign Legion there was a Wurtemberger, a lieutenant, who would not touch bunny, but who would devour grimalkin. Those who have not tasted couscoussou of cat, prepared according to the Arabian recipe—though the Arabs won't touch it—have never tasted anything.*

Our friend said much more, notably with regard to rat and horseflesh; and then he wound up: "But what is the good? Those who might benefit by my advice are not here, and, if they were, they would probably scorn it; I mean the very poor. The only item of animal food which cannot be adequately replaced by something else yielding as much or nearly as much nourishment is milk. But, unless an adult be in delicate health or suffering from ailments to the alleviation and cure of which milk is absolutely necessary, he may very well go without it for six months. Not so children. I am only showing you that the poor, with their slender resources—and Heaven knows they are slender enough—might do better than they are doing, for cats and rats must still be very plentiful, only they won't touch them."

The reference to the very poor and their slender resources recurred more than once that evening, but I knew that the authorities were trying to do all they could in the way of relieving general and individual

* The Arab *kuskus* generally consists of a piece of mutton baked in a paste with the vegetables of the season, flavoured with herbs; and the addition of half a dozen hard-boiled eggs. The whole of the flesh is boned.—EDITOR.

distress, and that they were admirably seconded by private charity, which not only placed comparatively large sums at their disposal, but bestirred itself by means of specially appointed committees and visitors. The rations of meat (horsemeat) and bread distributed were not sufficient. The first had already fallen to forty-five grammes per day per head, the second to three hundred and fifty grammes; * they were to fall much lower. Tickets were also distributed for set meals, with and without meat. There was, furthermore, a distribution of fuel, albeit that there was really no more fuel to distribute. All the wooden seats in the public thoroughfares, the scaffoldings before the half-finished buildings, had disappeared. At one of my friend's apartments there was none but the outer door left, all the others had been replaced by curtains. They had been chopped up to keep his family warm. The fear of the terrible landlord may have prevented the poor from imitating this proceeding. At any rate, I noticed no absent doors in my visits to any of them. A further supply of meat or bread, even if they had the money, was out of the question for them; because, though some shops remained open and their owners were compelled to sell according to the tariff set forth by the municipality, they had nothing to sell. I remember being in the Rue Lafayette one morning, near one of those shops, when I saw the whole of the crowd, that had been waiting there for hours probably, turn away disappointed. The assistant had just told them that "this morning we have nothing to sell but preserved truffles."

* Five hundred French grammes make seventeen ounces English, and a fraction.—EDITOR.

At the same time, I am bound to note the fact that, at the slightest rumours of peace, the usually empty windows became filled with artistically arranged pyramids of "canned" provisions, at prices considerably below those charged twenty-four hours before, and even below those mentioned in the municipal tariff. Frequent attempts were made by the police to discover the hiding-places for this stock, but they failed in every instance. Those hiding-places were far away from the shops, and the shopkeepers themselves were too wary to be caught napping. A stranger might have safely gone in and offered a hundred francs for half a dozen tins of their wares. They would have looked a perfect blank, and told him they had none to sell: and no wonder; their detection would have meant certain death; no earthly power could have saved them from the legitimate fury of the populace. And even those who bought the hidden food at abnormal prices were compelled to preserve silence, at the risk of seeing their supplies cut off. One thing is certain, and I can unhesitatingly vouch for it. My name had become known in connection with several committees for the relief of the poor. On the 25th of January, at 11 a.m., when the negotiations between Bismarck and M. Jules Favre could have been but in the preliminary stage, I received a note, brought by hand, from a grocer in the Faubourg Montmartre, asking me to call personally, as he had something to communicate which might be to the advantage of my protégés. An hour later, I was at his establishment, and he offered to sell me five hundred tins of various provisions and two hundred and fifty boxes of sardines at two francs each. It was something like double the ordinary price. A little more than three weeks before

that date, I had sent a letter to the same man, asking him for a similar quantity of goods, which I intended to distribute as New Year's gifts. The reply was, that he had none, but that he might *possibly* procure them at the rate of five francs a tin and box. I found out afterwards, that the excellent grocer had a son at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. I need not point out the logical deduction.

I am equally certain that there were large quantities of horseflesh, salted or fresh, hidden somewhere; for, as I have already noted, it was officially, or at any rate semi-officially stated, that, on the day of the conclusion of the armistice, there were thirty thousand live horses in Paris, and the greater part of these would have been slaughtered by order of the Government, if the measure had been thought expedient, for there is scarcely any need to say that the pretext of their being wanted for military purposes would not hold water. A sixth part of them, or less, would have been amply sufficient for that. In reality, M. Favre and his colleagues were, by this time, fully convinced that all further resistance was useless, but they had not the courage to say so frankly, and they wished to convert the advocates of "resistance to death" to their side by aggravating the scarcity of the food supply, as if it were not bad enough already. The horses confiscated by the Government for food were paid for by them at the rate of between one and two francs per pound, yet there was no possibility of buying a single pound of horseflesh, beyond what was distributed at the municipal canteens, for less than seven or eight francs. Whence this difference?

Butter could be bought for thirty to thirty-five

francs per pound, but such butter! Anything worth eating commanded sixty francs. There was a kind of grease that fetched two francs per pound, but even the poorest shrank from it, and preferred to eat dry bread, which was composed as follows :—

(FOR A LOAF OF 300 GRAMMES.)

75	grammes of wheat.
15	" rye, barley, or peas.
60	" rice.
90	" oats.
30	" chopped straw mixed with starch.
30	" bran.

As for the rest, here are some of the prices—at which, however, things were not always to be had :—

	fra.
A dog or a cat	20
A rat, crow, or sparrow	3 or 4
1 lb. of bear's flesh	12
1 lb. of venison	14
1 lb. of wolf's flesh, or porcupine's	8
A rabbit	40
A fowl	40
A pigeon	25
A goose	80
A turkey	100
1 lb. of ham (very rare)	10
1 lb. of bacon (not so rare)	6
Eggs (each)	5
Haricot beans (per litre)	8
Cabbages (each)	16
Leeks (each)	1
Bushel of carrots (2½ gallons)	75
Bushel of potatoes	35
Bushel of onions	80

Still, until the very last, there occurred, as far as I know, no case of actual starvation, and I was pretty well posted up in that respect. The very young and very old suffered most: for the milk that was sold at two francs per litre was simply disgraceful. three-

fourths of it was water ; and beef-tea, or that worthy of the name, was not to be had at any price. Both commodities were distributed to the poor at the municipal canteens, on the certificate of a doctor ; but the latter, though by no means hard-hearted, and thoroughly sympathetic with the ills he was scarcely able to alleviate, had to draw the line somewhere. Of bedding, bed-linen, and warm underclothing there was little or no lack ; but the cold, for several days, at frequent intervals was severe to a degree.

Our ex-lieutenant's reference to the poor and their slender resources recurred frequently to my mind for several days after the scene described above, and set me wondering how far the poor had parted, finally or temporarily, with their household gods and small valuables in order to obtain some of the quasi-luxuries I have just enumerated. In order to get at the truth of the matter, I determined to pay a visit to the central pawnbroking office in the Rue des Blancs Manteaux. I provided myself with a letter of introduction to the director, who placed an official at my disposal. This was towards the latter end of December.

I transcribe my informant's statement in brief and from memory, but I am positive as to main facts. Up till the end of August the transactions at the central office, which virtually include those of the whole of the capital, presented nothing abnormal, but the moment the investment became an almost foregone conclusion, there was a positive run on the Mont-de-Piété. The applicants for loans, however, were by no means of the poorest or even of the lower-middle class, but the well-to-do people, whose chief aim was to place their valuables in safety, and who looked upon the 9½ per

cent. interest they had to pay on the advances received as a premium for warehousing and insurance. They knew that nothing could be more secure than the fire and burglar proof receptacles of the Mont-de-Piété, and that, come what might, the State would be responsible for the value of the articles deposited.

This run ceased when the investment was an accomplished fact, but, as a matter of course, the financial resources had been put to a severe test, and, at the time my informant spoke to me, they had dwindled from nearly eight millions of francs, at which they were computed in the beginning of August, to about three-quarters of a million. The order of the mayor of Paris, intended to prevent this, had come too late. The decree of 1863, limiting the maximum of a loan to ten thousand francs at the chief office, and to five hundred francs at any of the auxiliary ones, had been suspended in favour of a decision that, during the investment, no loan should exceed fifty francs.* From the 19th of September to the end of October, the cessation from *all* labour, and, consequently, the non-receipt of wages throughout the capital, had to be faced in the acceptance of thousands of pledges, consisting of household goods, apparel, etc.; but, curiously enough, workmen's tools and implements formed but a small proportion of these. At present, the whole of the business was at a standstill; there was no redemption of pledges, and few were offered.†

* A similar measure had been decided upon in 1814, under analogous circumstances, but the maximum was twenty francs instead of fifty francs.—EDITOR.

† A curious feature in connection with the pledging of tools and implements may be recorded here. At the termination of the siege, a committee in London transmitted 20,000 francs (£800) for the express

Meanwhile, Christmas and the New Year were at hand, and not a single sortie had led to any practical modification of the situation. The cold was intense. Coal and coke could be obtained for neither money nor love. The street lamps had not been lighted for nearly a month; up till the end of October, one had been lighted here and there; then there had been an attempt to supply the absence of gas by paraffin in the public thoroughfares, but the stock of mineral oil was also getting lower. Most of the shops were closed, but, at the advent of the festive season, a few took down their shutters and made a feeble display of bonbons in sugar and chocolate, and even of marrons glacés. I doubt whether these articles found many purchasers. The toy-shops never took the trouble of exhibiting at all. They were wise in their abstention, for even the most ignorant Parisian was aware that nine-tenths of the wares in these establishments hailed from Germany, and he would assuredly have smashed the windows if they had been offered for sale. Nay, the booths that make their appearance on the Boulevards at that time of the year displayed few toys, except of a military kind. It was very touching, in after years, to hear the lads and lassies refer to the 1st of January, 1871, as *the New Year's Day without the New Year's gifts*.

purpose of redeeming these. The Paris committee entrusted with the task, while grateful for the solicitude shown, rightly considered that it would not go very far, considering that, at the time, the Mont-de-Piété held a total of 1,708,549 articles, representing loans to the amount of 87,502,743 francs. The authorities took particular pains to publish the receipt of the 20,000 francs, and the purposes thereof. Within a given time, they returned 6,430 francs to the committee. Only 2,383 tools (or sets of tools) had been redeemed, representing a lent value of 13,570 francs.

Nevertheless, it must not be thought that Paris was given over to melancholy on these two days. Crowds perambulated the streets and sat in the cafés. In spite of all that has been said by ultra-patriotic writers, I am inclined to think that the Parisians no longer cherished any illusions about the possibility of retrieving their disasters, though many may have thought that the besiegers would abstain, at the last moment, from shelling the city. The Government—whether with the intention of cheering the besieged or for the purpose of exhausting their stock of provisions as quickly as possible, in order to capitulate with better grace—had made the city a magnificent New Year's gift of

104,000	kilogrammes of preserved beef,
52,000	" " dried haricot beans,
52,000	" " olive oil,
52,000	" " coffee (not roasted),
52,000	" " chocolate;

which gift elicited the reply of a group of artists and littérateurs that, though thankful for their more epicurean brethren and sisters, they, the littérateurs and artists, had fared very well on Christmas Day and would meet again on New Year's Day to discuss the following menu :—

" Consommé de Cheval au millet.
 Brochettes de Foie de Chien à la Maître d'Hôtel.
 Emincé de Râble de Chat, Sauce Mayonnaise.
 Epaules et Filets de Chien braisés à la Sauce Tomato.
 Civet de Chat aux Champignons.
 Cotelettes de Chien aux Champignons.
 Gigots de Chien flanqués de Ratons.
 Sauce Poivrée.
 Bégonias au Jus.
 Plum-pudding au Rhum et à la Moelle de Cheval."

Simultaneously with the publication of the menu,

a dealer in the St. Germain Market put up a new signboard :—

“RÉSISTANCE À OUTRANCE.

“GRANDE BOUCHERIE CANINE ET FÉLINE.

“L'héroïque Paris brave les Prussiens ;
Il ne sera jamais vaincu par la famine !
Quand il aura mangé la race chevaline
Il mangera ses rats, et ses chats, et ses chiens.”

The proprietor of a cookshop in the Rue de Rome had confined himself to prose, but prose which, to those who could read it aright, was much cleverer than the poetry of his transpontine fellow-tradesman.

“VIN À DIX-HUIT SOUS

ET EAU-DESSUS,

ROSSE BEEF.

RAT GOUT DE MUTTON.*

Personally, I have eaten the flesh of elephants, wolves, cassiowaries, porcupines, bears, kangaroos, rats, cats, and horses. I did not touch dog's-flesh knowingly after I had been warned by our ex-lieutenant. The proprietor of the English butcher-shop, M. Debos,

* Here are the two English readings, as far as I am able to give them :—

“WINE AT EIGHTEEN SOUS THE LITRE

AND UPWARDS.

ROAST BEEF.

RAGOUT OF MUTTON.”

“WINE AT EIGHTEEN SOUS THE LITRE

AND WATER ATOP.

OLD CROCK'S FLESH.

RAT TASTING OF MUTTON.”—EDITOR.

who was not an Englishman at all, supplied most of these strange dishes; for he bought nearly all the animals from the Zoological Gardens, at tremendous prices. These were only the animals from the Jardin d'Acclimation in the Bois, which had been sent as guests to the Jardin des Plantes. The elephants belonged to the latter establishment, and were sold to M. Debos for twenty-seven thousand francs. In January I was elected a member of the Jockey Club, but I had dined there once before by special invitation. I give the menu as far as I remember:—

“Soupe au Poireau.
Aloyau de Bœuf.
Poule au Riz.
Flageolets aux Jus.
Biscuits de Reims glacés.
Charlotte aux Pommes.”

In spite of the hope that Paris would escape being shelled, minute instructions how to act, in the event of such a calamity, had been posted on the walls. In fact, if speechifying and the promulgation of decrees could have saved the city, Trochu first, and the rest afterwards, would have so saved it. But I have solemnly promised myself at the outset of these notes not to be betrayed into any criticism of the military operations, and I will endeavour to keep my promise to myself.

The first and foremost result of those directions on the part of the Government was a display of water-butts, filled to the brim, in the passage, and of sand-heaps in the yard of every building. As the months went by, and there was no sign of a bombardment, the contents of the casks became so much solid ice, and the sand-heaps disappeared beneath the accumulated

snow, to be converted into slush and mire at the first thaw, which gave us, at the same time, a kind of miniature deluge, because, as a matter of course, the barrels had sprung leaks which were not attended to at the time.

And when, early on the 5th of January, the first projectiles crashed down upon some houses in the south of Paris, the people were simply astonished, but still deluded themselves into the belief that it was a mistake, that the "trajectory" had been miscalculated, and the shells had carried farther than was intended. To a certain extent they had good grounds for their supposition. They had heard the big cannon boom and roar at frequent intervals ever since the morning of the 27th of December, and been given to understand that it was merely a big artillery duel for the possession of the plateau d'Avron, between the positions of Noisy-le-Grand and Gournay on the enemy's side, and the forts of Nogent, Rosny, and Noisy on that of the French. They were, furthermore, under the impression that the shelling of the city would be preceded by a final summons to surrender: they had got that notion mostly from their military dramas and popular histories. But there were men, better informed than the majority of the masses, who made sure that, if not the Parisians themselves, the foreign consuls and the aliens under their charge would receive a sufficiently timely notice, in order to leave the city if they felt so minded.

The 5th of January was a bitterly cold day; it had been freezing hard during the whole of the night, and, as I wended my way across the Seine, about noon, the mist, which had been hanging over the river, was

slowly rising in banked and jagged masses, with only a rift here and there for the pitilessly glacial sun to peer through and mock at our shivering condition. When I got to the Boulevard Montparnasse, I met several stretchers, bearing sentries who had been absolutely frozen to within an ace of death.

I know nothing of the military import of a bombardment, but have been told that even the greatest strategists only count upon the moral effect it produces upon the besieged inhabitants. I can only say this: if Marshal von Moltke took the "moral effect" of his projectiles into his calculations to accelerate the surrender of Paris, he might have gone on shelling Paris for a twelvemonth without being one whit nearer his aim; that is, if I am to judge by the scene I witnessed on that January morning, before familiarity with the destruction-dealing shells could have produced the proverbial contempt. At the risk of offending all the sensation-mongers, foreign and native, with pen or with pencil, I can honestly say that a broken-down omnibus and a couple of prostrate horses would have excited as much curiosity as did the sight of the battered tenements at Vaugirard, Montrouge, and Vanves. On the Chaussée du Maine, the roadway had been ploughed up for a distance of about half a dozen yards by a shell; in another spot, a shell had gone clean through the roof and killed a woman by the side of her husband; in a third, a shell had carried away part of the wall of a one-storied cottage, and the whole of the opposite wall: in short, there was more than sufficient evidence that life was no longer safe within the fortifications, and yet there was no wailing, no wringing of hands, no heartrending frenzied

look of despair, either pent up or endeavouring to find vent in shrieks and yells, nay, not even on the part of the women. There was merely a kind of undemonstrative contempt—very unlike the usual French way of manifesting it—blended with a considerable dash of *badauderie*,—for which word I cannot find an English equivalent, because the Parisian loafer or idler is unlike any of his European congeners. To grasp the difference between the former and the latter, one must have had the good fortune to see the same incident in the streets of Paris, London, Madrid, Florence, and Rome, Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg, not to mention Brussels, the Hague, Amsterdam, Munich, and Dresden. The “Monsieur Prudhomme” of Charles Monnier shows but one facet of the Paris badaud’s character. The nearest approach to him is the middle-class English tourist on the Continent, who endeavours to explain to his wife and companions things he does not know himself, and blesses his stars aloud for having made him an Englishman.

But even the Paris badaud, who is not unlike his Roman predecessor in his craving for circuses, must have bread; and when the cry arises, a fortnight later, that “there is no more bread,” the siege is virtually at an end.

CHAPTER XIV.

Some men of the Commune—Cluseret—His opinion of Rossel—His opinion of Bergeret—What Cluseret was fighting for—Thiers and Abraham Lincoln—Raoul Rigault on horseback—Théophile Ferré—Ferré and Gil-Pérès, the actor—The comic men of the Commune—Gambon—Jourde, one of the most valuable of the lot—His financial abilities—His endeavours to save—Jourde at Godillot's—Colonel Maxime Lisbonne—The Editor's recollections of him—General Dombrowski and General la Cécilia—A soirée at the Tuileries—A gala-performance at the Opéra Comique—The death-knell of the Commune.

I HAVE before now spoken of a young medical student in whose company I spent several evenings at a café on the Boulevard St. Michel, during the Empire. He, like myself, remained in Paris during the siege, and refused to stir at the advent of the Commune. As a matter of course, whenever we met, while the latter lasted, we rarely spoke of anything else. He sympathized, to a certain extent, with the principle, though not with the would-be expounders of it. I knew few, if any, of the leaders even by sight, though I had heard of some, such as, for instance, Jules Vallès, in connection with their literary work. My admiration was strictly confined to those performances, and I often said so to my friend. "You are mistaken in your estimate of them," he invariably replied. "There are men of undoubted talent among them, for instance, Cluseret; but most of them are like

square pegs in round holes. Come with me to-night, and you will be able to judge for yourself; for he is sure to be at the Brasserie Saint-Séverin."

I had never been to the Brasserie Saint-Séverin, though I had paid two or three visits several years before to the Café de la Renaissance opposite the Fontaine Saint-Michel, at which establishment the Commune may be said to have been hatched. It was there that, in 1866, Raoul Rigault, Longuet, the brothers Levraud, Dacosta, Genton, Protot, and a dozen more were arrested by the Commissary of Police, M. Clément.

That night, about eight o'clock, we crossed the Pont Saint-Michel, and, in a minute or so, found ourselves amidst some of the shining lights of the Commune.

Save on review days I had never seen so many brilliant uniforms gathered together. As far as I can recollect, there was only one civilian in the group pointed out to me. He looked a mere skeleton, was misshapen, and one of the ugliest men I have ever met. I asked his name, and was told it was Tridon. The name was perfectly familiar to me as belonging to one of the most remarkable polemicists during the late régime. A little while afterwards, Cluseret came in.

My friend introduced me, and we sat talking for more than two hours; and I have rarely been more interested than I was that night. Cluseret spoke English very well, for he had been in America several years, and our conversation was carried on in that language. I have already remarked that I had no intention, at that time, to jot down my recollections,

still I was so impressed with what I had heard that I made some rough memoranda when I got home. They are among the papers I have preserved.

Cluseret fostered no illusions as to the final upshot of the Commune. "If every man were as devoted to the cause as Kossuth and Garibaldi were to theirs, we should not be able to establish a permanent Commune; but this is by no means the case. Most of the leaders, even those who are not self-seekers, are too visionary in their aims; they will not abate one jot of their ideal. The others think of nothing but their own aggrandisement, and though many are no doubt capable to a degree, they are absolutely useless for the posts they have chosen for themselves. There are certainly exceptions; such as, for instance, Rossel. His technical knowledge is very considerable. If I had to describe him in two words, I should call him Lothario-Cromwell. For, notwithstanding his military aptitudes and his Puritan stiffness in many things, he has too many petticoats about him. In addition to this, he is overbearing and absolutely eaten up with ambition; he is a republican who despises the proletariat; he would fain imitate the axiom of Napoleon I., 'The tools to those who can use them;' but he forgets that it will not do for a socialistic régime such as we would establish, because it is exactly those that cannot use the tools who wish to be treated as if they could. If they had intelligence enough to use the tools, they would have lifted themselves out of their humble, unsatisfactory positions without any aid. Rossel is no doubt a better strategist than I am, and I do not in the least mind his letting me know it, but if Dombrowski or Bergeret was 'Delegate

for War,' Rossel would have been in prison or shot a fortnight ago.

"For," continued Cluseret, "Bergeret especially thinks himself a heaven-born general. He shows well on horseback, because, I believe, he began life as a stable-lad: so did Michel Ney; but then, Michel Ney served his apprenticeship at fighting, while Bergeret became a compositor, a chef-de-claque, a proof-reader, and, finally, a traveller for a publishing firm. All these are, no doubt, very honourable occupations, but they are scarcely calculated to make a good general. Still, you should see him: he wears his sash as your officers wear theirs when on duty; he would like the people to mistake it for the grand-cordon of the Légion d'Honneur; and his staff is more numerous than that of the late Emperor. You should go and dine at the head-quarters of the military governor of Paris; I am sure you would be very welcome. Marast at the Palais-Bourbon in '48 was nothing to it. If the Commune lasts another three months there will be servants in livery, gold lace, and powder, like in your country. At present, Bergeret has to put up with attendants in faultless black.

"Personally," he went on, "I am not fighting for Communism, but for Communalism, which, I need not tell you, is quite a different thing. I fail to see why Paris and Lyons should be judged incapable of managing their own municipal affairs without the interference of the State, while other great provincial centres are considered capable of doing so. The English Government does not interfere with the municipal affairs of London on the plea that it is the capital, with those of Manchester on the plea that

it has inaugurated a policy of its own, any more than it interferes with those of Liverpool, Leeds, or Bristol. Your lord-lieutenants of counties are virtually decorative officials, something different from our prefects and our sub-prefects, and your Home Secretary has not a hundredth part of the power of our Minister of the Interior. We wish to go a step further than you, without, however, shirking the financial obligations imposed by a federation. What you would call imperial taxes, we are willing to pay in kind as well as money. This is one of the things we do want; what we do not want is the resuscitation of the Empire. I am not speaking at random when I tell you that there are rumours about traitors in our camp, and that, according to these rumours, the struggle against the Versailles troops would be a mere pretext to sweep the deck for the unopposed entry of an imperial army into Paris. Whence would that army be recruited? From among the prisoners going to leave Germany, who have been worked all the while in the interest of the Napoleonic dynasty. After all, we have as much right to overthrow the Government of Versailles as the Government of Versailles had the right to upset the Empire. Their powers are by no means more valid by virtue of the recent elections, than was the power of Louis-Napoléon by virtue of the plébiscite of 1870. Does M. Thiers really think that he is a better or greater man than Abraham Lincoln, who treated the Southerners as belligerents, not as insurgents?"

So far Cluseret. I am not prepared to say that he was a strictly honourable man, but he was a very intelligent one, probably the most intelligent among the leaders of the Commune. At any rate, his con-

versation made me anxious to get a nearer sight of some of the latter, and, as they had evidently made the Brasserie Saint-Séverin their principal resort of an evening, I returned thither several times.

A few nights afterwards, I was just in time to witness the arrival of Raoul Rigault, on horseback, accompanied by a staff running by the side of his animal. The whole reminded me irresistibly of Decamp's picture, "*La Patrouille Turque*." The Prefect of Police was scarcely less magnificently attired than the rest of his fellow-dignitaries. His uniform, if I remember rightly, was blue with red facings, but it is impossible to say, because it was covered everywhere with gold lace. His myrmidons hustled the crowd in order to make room for their chief, and some one laughed: "*Mais il n'y a rien de changé; c'est absolument comme sous l'Empire*." For a moment Rigault sat quite still, surveying the crowd and ogling the women through his double eye-glasses. Then he alighted, and caught sight of my friend and myself standing on the threshold. "*Quels sont ces citoyens?*" he inquired, taking us in from top to toe, and stroking his long beard all the while. Some one told him our names, at which he made a wry face, the more that mine must have been familiar to him, seeing that a very near relative of mine, bearing the same, had been a special favourite with General Vinoy. He did not think fit to molest us; had he done so, it might have fared badly with us, for by the time Lord Lyons could have interfered, we might have been shot.

Ever since, my friend and I have been under the impression that we owed our lives to a dark, ugly little man who, at that moment, whispered something to him,

and who, my friend told me, immediately afterwards, was the right hand of Raoul Rigault, Théophile Ferré. That name was also familiar to me, as it was to most Parisians, previous to the outbreak of the war, because Ferré was implicated in the plot against Louis-Napoléon's life, and was tried in the early part of '70 at Blois. Every one knew how he insulted the President, how he refused to answer, and finally exclaimed, "Yes, I am an anarchist, a socialist, an atheist, and woe to you when our turn comes." He kept his word; he was a fiend, and looked one. Whenever there was anything cruel and bloodthirsty going on, he made it a point to be present. He was, though ugly, not half so ugly as Tridon, but one involuntarily recoiled from him.

Curiously enough, this very Théophile Ferré, whom I then saw for the first time, had been the subject of a conversation I had with Gil-Pérès, the actor of the Palais-Royal, on the 25th or 26th of March. I had known Gil-Pérès from the moment he made his mark in "*La Dame aux Camélias*" as Gaudens. To my great surprise, a day or two after the proclamation of the Commune, I heard that he had been cruelly maltreated in the Rue Drouot, that he had narrowly escaped being killed. Two days later, I paid him a visit in his lodgings at Montmartre; for he had been severely, though not dangerously hurt, and was unable to leave his bed.

"I am very sorry for your mishap," I said; "but what, in Heaven's name, induced you to meddle with politics?"

He burst out laughing, in that peculiar laugh of his which I have never heard before or since, on or off the

stage. The nearest approach to it was that of Grassot, but the latter's was like a discharge of artillery, while Gil-Pérès, was like that of a musketry volley.

"I did not meddle with politics," he replied; "but you know how fond I am of going among crowds to study character. This day last week, I was passing along the Rue Drouot, when I saw a large group in front of the Mairie. I had left home early in the morning, I knew nothing of what was going on in my neighbourhood, so you may imagine my surprise when I heard them calmly discussing the death of Clément Thomas and Lecomte. My hair stood positively on end, and I must have pushed a bit in order to get nearer the speakers. I had a long black coat on, and they mistook me for a curé. I did all I could to tell them my name, but, before I could utter a word, I was down, and they began trampling on me. Some one, God alone knows who, saved me by telling them my name. I knew nothing more, for I was brought home unconscious. And to think," he added, "that I might have been a member of the Commune myself, if I had liked."

"What do you mean?" I said, for I began to think that he was out of his mind.

"Well, you know that during the siege I tried to do my duty as a National Guard, and in my battalion was this Théophile Ferré of whom you have already heard. A most intelligent creature, but poor as Job and ferocious to a degree. He was a study to me, and, of late, he frequently came to see me in the morning. I generally asked him to stay to breakfast, for I liked to hear him talk of the future Commune, though I had not the slightest faith in his visions. I considered him

a downright lunatic. About two or three days before this outbreak, he came, one morning, looking as pale as a ghost, but evidently very much excited. Before I had time to ask him the cause of his emotion, he exclaimed, 'This time there is no mistake about it; we are the masters.' I suppose my face must have looked a perfect blank, for he proceeded to explain. 'In two days we'll hold our sittings at the Hôtel-de-Ville, and the Commune will be proclaimed. And now, he added, 'what can I do for you, citoyen Gil-Pérès? You have always been very kind to me, and I am not likely to forget it when I am at the top of the tree.'

"I told him that I'd feel much obliged to him if he could induce Sardou or Dumas to write me a good part, like the latter had done before, because I wanted to be something more than a comic actor. But I saw that he was getting angry.

"Do you mean to tell me,' he almost hissed, 'that you do not want to belong to the Commune?'

"I haven't the slightest ambition that way,' I replied. 'People would only make fun of me, and they would be perfectly right.'

"Why should people make fun of you?'

"Because, because——' I stammered.

"He left me no time to finish. 'Because you are a small man,' he said. 'Well, I am a small man, too, and an ugly one into the bargain. I can assure you that the world will hear as much of me before long as if I had been an Adonis and a Hercules.' With this he disappeared, and I have not seen him since."

My purpose in reporting this conversation is to show that the Commune, with all its evils, might have been prevented by the so-called government of Versailles, if

its members had been a little less eager to get their snug berths comfortably settled.

To return for a moment to Ferré and his companions, who, without exception, were sober to a degree, though many were probably fond of good cheer. The English writers, often very insufficiently informed, have generally maintained the contrary, but I know for a fact that, among the leaders of the movement, drunkenness was unknown. Ferré himself was among the soberest of the lot: the few evenings I saw him he drank either cold coffee or some cordial diluted with water. Nevertheless, it was he who was directly responsible for the death of Archbishop Darboy, whom he could and might have saved.

In every modern tragedy there is a comic element, and in that of the Commune the comic parts were, to a certain extent, sustained by Gambon, Jourde, and a few others whom it is not necessary to mention. Gambon was one of the mildest of creatures, and somewhat of a "communard malgré lui." He would have willingly "left the settlement of all these vexed questions to moral force," and he proposed once or twice a mission to Versailles to that effect. He was about fifty, and a fine specimen of a robust, healthy farmer. His love of "peaceful settlement" arose from an experiment he had made in that way during the Empire, though it is very doubtful whether strictly logical reasoners would have looked upon it as "peaceful." Gambon had been a magistrate and a member of the National Assembly during the Second Republic, and voted with the conservative side. The advent of the Empire made an end of his parliamentary career, and, in order to mark his disapproval of the Coup-d'Etat and its sequel, Gambon

refused to pay his taxes. The authorities seized one of his cows, and were proceeding to sell it by auction, when Gambon, accompanied by a good many of his former constituents, appeared on the scene. "This cow," he shouts, "has been stolen from me by the Imperial fisc, and whosoever buys it is nothing more than a thief himself." Result : not a single bid for the cow, and the auctioneer was compelled to adjourn the sale for a week. The auctioneer deemed it prudent to transport the cow to a neighbouring commune, but Gambon had got wind of the affair, and adopted the same expedient of moral persuasion. For nearly three months the auctioneer transported the cow from one commune to another, and Gambon followed him everywhere, until they reached the limits of the department. Gambon apprehended that moral persuasion would have no effect among strangers, and he let things take their course. The cost of selling the cow amounted to about ten times its worth. As a matter of course, the whole affair was revived by "*les journaux bien pensants*" at the advent of the Commune, and Gambon was elected a member by the 10th Arrondissement. Gambon managed to escape into Switzerland ; but when the amnesty was proclaimed, he returned, and solicited once more the suffrages of his former constituents. At the Brasserie Saint-Séverin, Gambon was generally to be found at the ladies' table, about the occupants of which I cannot speak, seeing that I was not introduced to them.

Jourde was one of two "financial delegates" of the Commune. He had been a superior employé at the Bank of France, and was considered an authority on financial affairs. It was he to whom the Marquis de

Ploëuc, the governor of the Bank, had handed the first million for the use of the Commune. My friend, the doctor, had known him in his former capacity, and often invited him to our table, to which invitation the "paymaster-general" always eagerly responded. One evening, the conversation turned upon the events which had preceded the request for funds. "On the second day of the Commune," he said, "the want of money began to be horribly felt. Eudes proposed that I should go and fetch some from the Bank of France. To be perfectly candid, I did not care about it. Had I been a soldier, I might have invaded the Bank at the head of a regiment; but, to go and ask my former chief for a million or so as a matter of course, was a different thing, and I had not the moral courage. The director of the Bank of France is very little short of a god to his subordinates, and, in spite of our boasted 'Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality,' there is no nation so ready to bow down before its governors as the French. Seeing that I hung back, Eudes proposed to go himself, and did, refusing to take a single soldier with him. But he did not want the responsibility of handling the million of francs the governor placed at our disposal, so I was, after all, obliged to beard my former chief in his own den. He was very polite, and called me 'Monsieur le délégué aux finances,' but I would have preferred his calling me all the names in the world, for I caught sight of a very ironical smile at the corners of his mouth when, on taking leave of him, he said, 'You may be my successor one day, Monsieur le délégué, and I hope you will profit by the lessons I have always endeavoured to teach my subordinates; obedience to the powers that be.'"

Jourde was by no means a fool or a braggart; he was a very good administrator, and exceedingly conscientious. Like most men who have had the constant handling of important sums of money, he was absolutely indifferent to it; and I feel certain that he did not feather his own nest during the two months he had the chance. But he vainly endeavoured to impress upon the others the necessity for economy. Every now and then, he tore his red hair and beard at the waste going on at the Hôtel-de-Ville, where, in the beginning, Assi was keeping open table. Not that they were feasting, but every one who had a mind could sit down, and, though the sum charged by the steward was moderate, two francs for breakfast and two francs fifty centimes for dinner, the number of self-invited guests increased day by day, and the paymaster-general was at his wits' end to keep pace with the expenses. The Central-Committee put a stop to this indiscriminate hospitality by simply arresting Assi, whom I never saw.

When the Commune decreed the demolition of the Vendôme column, Jourde was still more angry and in despair. He was, first of all, opposed to its destruction, from a patriotic and common-sense point of view: secondly, he objected to the waste of money that destruction entailed; he endeavoured to cut the Gordian knot by stopping the workmen's pay. Though three or four of his fellow "delegates" were absolutely of the same opinion, the rest sent him a polite intimation that if the necessary funds were not disbursed voluntarily they would send for them, and take the opportunity, at the same time, to "put him against the wall," and make an end of him. That night,

Courbet, the painter, who had been the prime mover in this work of destruction, came to the Brasserie Saint-Séverin from the Brasserie Andler, hard by, to taste the sweets of his victory. His friend, Chaudey, of the *Siècle*, was no longer with him. Like Mgr. Darboy, the Abbés Lagarde, Crozés, and Deguerry, he had been arrested by Raoul Rigault as a hostage, in virtue of a decree by the Commune, setting forth that every execution of a prisoner of war, taken by the Versaillais, would be followed by the execution of three hostages to be drawn by lot.

Jourde did not wear a uniform; at any rate, I never saw him in one. I happened to remark upon it one evening, and he then gave me a partial explanation why the others did wear them in so ostentatious a manner.

"It is really done to please the National Guards; they mistrust those who remain 'in mufti;' they attribute their reluctance to don the uniform to the fear of being compromised, to the wish to escape unnoticed if things should go wrong. I grant you that all this does not warrant the uniforms most of my colleagues do wear, but to the Latin races the wisdom of Solomon lies in his magnificence, and they trace the elevation of Joseph to its primary cause—his coat of many colours. I am not only 'delegate of finances' and paymaster-general, but head cook and bottle-washer in all that concerns monetary matters to the Central-Committee. I have very few clerks to assist me in my work, and fewer still upon whose honesty I can depend; consequently, I am compelled to do a good deal of drudgery myself. Yesterday I received the fortnightly accounts of

Godillot,* the military tailors and accoutrement manufacturers. They seemed to me simply monstrous, not so much in respect of the prices charged for each uniform, as in respect of the number of uniforms supplied. To have sent one of my clerks would have been of no earthly use; there is an old Normand saying about sending the cat to Rome and his coming back mewing; the clerk would have simply come back mewing, saying that there was no mistake, so I went myself. I saw the chief manager.

"'I am positive there is no mistake, monsieur,' he said, 'though I may tell you at once that I made the same remark when I passed the accounts; the number of uniforms seemed to me inordinately large; mais il faut se rendre à l'évidence, and I ticketed off every item by its corresponding voucher. Still I felt that there is a terrible waste somewhere, and said so to the head of the retail department. "If you will remain downstairs for one hour," was the answer, "you will have the explanation." I can only say the same to you, Monsieur le délégué.'

"I did remain on that ground-floor for one hour," Jourde went on, "and, during that time, no fewer than eight young fellows came in with vouchers for complete uniforms of lieutenants or captains of the staff. Most of them looked to me as if they had never handled a sword or rifle in their lives—yardsticks seemed more in their line; and the airs they gave themselves positively disgusted me; but I do not want another reminder of the Central-Committee about my cheese-paring, so I'll let things take their course. Look, here

* The word "Godillot" has passed into the French language, and, at present, means the soldier's shoes.—EDITH.

is a sample of how we deck ourselves out quand nous allons en guerre."

I looked in the direction pointed out to me, and beheld a somewhat dark individual with lank, black hair, of ordinary height, or a little below perhaps, dressed in a most extraordinary costume. He wore a blue Zouave jacket, large baggy crimson breeches tucked into a pair of quasi-hessian boots, a crimson sash, and a black sombrero hat with a red feather. A long cavalry sabre completed the costume. Upon the whole, he carried himself well, though there was a kind of swashbuckler air about him which smacked of the stage. I was not mistaken; the scent or the smell of the footlights was over it all.

"This is Colonel Maxime Lisbonne, an actor by profession, who has taken to soldiering with a vengeance," said Jourde. "There is no doubt about his bravery, but he is as fit to be a colonel as I am to be a general. It does not seem to strike my colleagues that, in no matter what profession, one has to serve an apprenticeship, and, most of all, in the science of soldiering; Maxime Lisbonne said he would be a colonel, so they, without more ado, made him one.* He never moves without that Turco at his heels."

* During my stay in Paris, 1881-86, as the correspondent of a London evening paper, I had occasion to see a great deal of M. Maxime Lisbonne, who is a prominent figure at nearly every social function, such as *premières*, the unveiling of monuments, the opening of public buildings, etc. The reason of this prominence has never been very clear to me, unless it be on the assumption that the Paris journalists, even the foremost of whom he treats on a footing of equality, consider him "good copy." Only as late as a few years ago, he made a considerable sensation in the Paris press by appearing at one of M. Carnot's receptions in evening dress, redolent of benzine, "because the dress had been lying *perdu* for so many years." It was he who started

On another occasion I saw the famous General Dombrowski, and the no less famous Colonel or General la Cécilia. I only exchanged a few words with the former, but I sat talking for a whole evening to the latter. He was a short, spare, fidgety man, strongly pitted with small-pox, with a few straggling hairs on the upper lip and chin. He was terribly near-sighted, and wore a pair of thick spectacles. Nervous and restless to a degree, but a voice of remarkable sweetness. His English was faultless, with scarcely any accent, and I was told that he spoke every European language and several Oriental ones with the same accuracy. He was the only Frenchman who could converse with Dombrowski and the other Poles in their native language. He was a clever mathematician, and, that evening, he endeavoured to prove mathematically that Von Moltke had committed several blunders, both at Sadowa and Sedan. "That kind of thing," said Jourde, after he was gone, "was sure to 'fetch' the Central-Committee; he always

the famous "taverne du bain," on the Boulevard Rochechouart, to which "all Paris" flocked. Previous to this, he had been the lessee of the Bouffes du Nord, at which theatre he brought out Louise Michel's "Nadine." Though by no means an educated man, he can, on occasions, behave himself very well, and truth compels me to state that he is very good-natured and obliging. One day, on the occasion of an important murder trial, I failed to see Commandant Lunel at the Palais de Justice, and was turning away disconsolately, when, at a sign from M. Lisbonne, the sergeant of the Gardes de Paris, who had refused to admit me on the presentation of my card, relented. That same afternoon, at the mere expression of his wish, the manager of the Jardin de Paris, which had just been opened, presented me with a season ticket, or, to speak correctly, placed my name on the permanent free list. In short, I could mention a score of instances of a similar nature; all tending to show that M. Maxime Lisbonne's "participation in the events of the Commune" has had the effect of investing him with a kind of social halo.—EDITOR.

reminds me of the doctors in Molière trying to prove that one of their confrères had cured a patient contrary to the principles of medicine. Mind, do not imagine that La Cécilia is not a good soldier. He got all his grades in the Italian army, on the battle-fields of '59-'60, and, during the late war, he directed the brilliant defence of Alençon. But between a good soldier and a great general there is a vast difference."

Physically, Dombrowski was almost the counterpart of La Cécilia, with the exception of the glasses and the small-pox. But while the Frenchman—for Cécilia was a Frenchman notwithstanding his Italian name—was modest though critical, the Pole was a braggart, though by no means devoid of courage. Up to the very end, he sent in reports of his victories, all of which were purely imaginary. Even as late as the 21st of May, when the Versailles troops were carrying everything before them, the newspaper-boys were shouting, "Brilliant victory of General Dombrowski." Dombrowski had been invested with his high command under the pretext that he had fought under Garibaldi and in the Polish struggle against Russia. It transpired afterwards that he had never seen Garibaldi nor Garibaldi him, and that, so far from having aided his own countrymen, he had been a simple private in the Russian army. Still, he was a better man than his countryman Wroblewski, who showed his courage by going to bed while the Versailles were shelling Vanves.

* * * * *

Among my papers I find a torn programme of a concert at the Tuileries during the Commune. It reads as follows:—

COMMUNE DE PARIS,
PALAIS DES TUILERIES

Servant pour LA PREMIÈRE FOIS à une œuvre patriotique

GRAND CONCERT

Au Profit des Veuves et Orphelins de la République.

Sous le Patronage de la Commune et du Citoyen Dr. Rousselle.

Tout porteur de billet pris à l'avance pourra sans rétribution, visiter
le Palais des Tuileries.

The rest is missing, but I remember that among the artists who gave their services were Mesdames Agar and Bordas; MM. Coquelin cadet, and Francis Thomé, the pianist.

I did not take my ticket beforehand, consequently was not entitled to a stroll through the Palace previous to the concert. When I entered the Salle des Maréchaux, where the concert was to take place, I felt thankful that the trial had been spared to me, and I mentally ejaculated a wish that I might never see that glorious apartment under similar circumstances. The traces of neglect were too painful to behold, though I am bound to say that I could detect no proofs of wilful damage. My wish was gratified with a vengeance. A little more than a month afterwards, the building was in flames, and, at the hour I write, it is being razed to the ground.

I did not stay long; I heard Madame Agar, dressed in deep mourning, declaim "the Marseillaise," and M. Thomé execute a fantasia on well-known operatic airs. Some of the reserved seats were occupied by the minor

dignitaries of the Commune, but the greater part of the place was filled by working men and their spouses and the very *petite bourgeoisie*. The latter seemed to be in doubt whether to enjoy themselves or not; but the former were very vociferous, and had evidently made up their minds that the Commune was the best of all possible régimes, seeing that it enabled them to listen to a concert in a palace for a mere trifle. "That's equality, as I understand it, monsieur," said a workman in a very clean blouse to me, at the same time making room for me on the seat next to him. He and his companion beguiled the time between the first and second number on the programme by sucking barley-sugar.

About a month later—on Wednesday, May 17th, but I will not be certain—I was present at the first gala-performance organized by the Commune, although the Versailles troops were within gunshot of the fortifications. This time I had taken a ticket beforehand. The performance was to take place at the Opéra-Comique, and long before the appointed hour the Boulevards and the streets adjoining the theatre were crowded with idlers, anxious to watch the arrival of the bigwigs under whose immediate patronage the entertainment was to be given. The papers had been full of it for days and days beforehand; the posters on the walls had set forth its many attractions. In accordance with traditional usage on such occasions, the programme was a miscellaneous one, and the wags did not fail to remark that the Commune ought to have struck out something original instead of blindly following the precedents of tyrants; but in reality the Commune had no choice. Few of the principal artists

of the subsidized theatres were available, and there was an evident reluctance to co-operate among some of those who were; hence it was decided to give fragments of such operas or comedies, calculated to stimulate still further the patriotic and republican sentiments with which the majority of the spectators were credited. There had been less difficulty in recruiting the orchestra, and a very fair band was got together. A great many invitations had been issued; few of the seats, especially in the better parts, were paid for.

All the entrances had been thrown open, and around every one there was a considerable gathering, almost exclusively composed of National Guards in uniform, and women of the working classes, who enthusiastically cheered each known personage on his arrival. The latter were too magnificent for words, the clanking sabres, resplendent uniforms, and waving plumes only paled in contrast with the toilettes of their female companions who hung proudly on their arms. For them, at any rate, "*le jour de gloire était arrivé.*"

The crowd, especially the fairer portion of it, was decidedly enthusiastic, perhaps somewhat too enthusiastic, in their ultra-cordial greetings and recognition of the ladies, so suddenly promoted in the social scale. Mélanie and Clarisse would have been satisfied with a less literal interpretation of "*Auld Lang Syne,*" as they stepped out of the carriages, the horses of which belied the boast that at the end of the siege there were 30,000 serviceable animals of that kind left.

The performance had been timed for half-past seven; at half-past eight, the principal box set apart for the chiefs of the new régime was still empty. As I have

already said, disquieting rumours had been afloat for the last few days with regard to the approach of the Versailles troops, the guns had been thundering all day long, and, what was worse, for the last forty-eight hours no "startling victory" had been announced either on the walls of Paris or in the papers. Some of the "great men," among the audience in the stalls and dress-circle, and easily to be distinguished from the ruck of ordinary mortals, professed themselves unable to supply authentic information, but as the performance had not been countermanded, they suggested that things were not so bad as they looked.

The theatre was crammed from floor to ceiling, and the din was something terrible. The heat was oppressive; luckily the gas was burning low because the companies were as yet unable to provide a full supply. There were few people out of uniform in either stalls or dress-circle, but the upper parts were occupied by blouses with a fair sprinkling of cloth coats. The women seemed to me to make the most infernal noise. The two stage-boxes were still empty; in the others there were a good many journalists and ladies who had come to criticize the appearance and demeanour of the "dames de nos nouveaux gouvernants." There was one box which attracted particular attention; one of its occupants, evidently a "dame du monde," was in evening dress, wearing some magnificent diamonds, while it was very patent that those of her own social status had made it a point to dress as simply as possible. I have never been able to find out the name of the lady; I had not seen her before, I have not seen her since.

At about a quarter to nine the doors of the stage-

boxes were flung back, and the guests of the evening appeared. But alas, they were not the chief members of the Commune, only the secondary characters. It is doubtful, though, whether the former could have been more magnificently attired than were the latter. Their uniforms were positively hidden beneath the gold lace.

Immediately, the band struck up the inevitable "Marseillaise;" the spectators in the upper galleries joined in the chorus; the building shook to its foundations, and, amidst the terrible din, one could distinctly hear the crowds on the Boulevards re-echoing the strains. The occupants of the state boxes gave the signal for the applause, then the curtain rose, and Mdlle. Agar, in peplos and cothurnus, recited the strophes once more. When the curtain fell, the audience rushed to the foyer or out in the open air; at any rate, the former was not inconveniently crowded. Among those strolling up and down I noticed the lady of the diamonds, on the arm of a rather common-looking individual in a gorgeous uniform. I believe I caught sight of the American Minister, but I will not be certain.

This time the curtain rose upon an act of a comedy: the spectators, however, did not seem to be vastly interested; they were evidently waiting for the duo to be sung by Madame Ugalde and a tenor whose name I do not remember. He was, I heard, an amateur of great promise.

Scarcely had Madame Ugalde uttered her first notes, when a bugler of the franc-tireurs of the Commune stepped in front of an empty box and sounded the charge. The effect was startling. The audience rose

to a man, and rushed to the exits. In less than five minutes the building was empty. I had let the human avalanche pass by. When I came outside I was told that it was a false alarm, or, rather, a practical joke; but no one re-entered the theatre. Thus ended the gala-performance of the Commune, and a careful observer would have had no difficulty in foreseeing the end of the latter. The bugler had, unconsciously perhaps, sounded its death-knell.



THE END.

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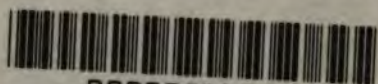
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